In reply please quote:
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Dr L Montagnier
Unit d'Oncologie Virale
Institut Pasteur
28 rue du Dr Roux
75724 Paris Cedex 15
FRANCE

Dear Dr Montagnier

Your manuscript has now been seen by two referees whose comments are attached. In view of their criticisms I am afraid we are unable to offer to publish your manuscript in Nature and I am therefore regretfully returning it. I hope you find our referees' comments useful.

Yours sincerely

Guil Winchester
Assistant Editor

Enc
Referee 2

The manuscript by Klatzman et al. discusses the T-cell tropism of a new human retrovirus first identified in a patient "at risk" for AIDS. Their conclusion that OKT4+ cells are selectively infected by cell-free virus would be of considerable importance; however, the manuscript provides insufficient data to support such a conclusion.

The authors might consider the following:

1. More thorough quantitative kinetics of virus infection should be performed. Virus production should be measured at earlier and more frequent intervals. Table 2 demonstrates significant reverse transcriptase activity at only one time point (9 days). OKT8+ cells might show different kinetics.

2. As retroviruses are dependent upon cell replication for productive infection (see for example Temin: J Cell Physiol 69:53-64, 1967; Varmus et al.: Cell 11: 307-319, 1977), the properties of cells in infected populations should be monitored, in particular, the percentage of viable cells and the percentage of replicating cells at different times after infection.

3. The data for percentage of virus-positive cells determined by immunofluorescence should be presented to corroborate the reverse transcriptase data.

4. It would be advisable to perform the infections using purified virus since crude supernatants from cord blood cells are likely to contain lymphokines which may affect the viability and proliferation of the T-cell subpopulations differently.

5. The statement on page 4 that "All HTLV producing cell lines ... express the OKT4+ phenotype" is incorrect. For example, B lymphocytes may be infected (Yamamoto et al.: Nature 299:367-369, 1982).