

Response to reviewers and editors (59251)

Occult HCV infection in the Middle East and Eastern Mediterranean countries: A systematic review and meta-analysis

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Reviewer #1:

Scientific Quality: Grade B (Very good)

Language Quality: Grade B (Minor language polishing)

Conclusion: Accept (General priority)

Specific Comments to Authors: The most valuable aspect of this work is, in my opinion, is the lack of such kind of meta-analysis study about this region. Despite the limitation being in most of studies from Egypt and Iran. I think the abstract has to be shortened. (Detailed review attached as a pdf)

- Thanks a lot for your comments and for approving our work for publication. The abstract was shortened according to your suggestion.

Science editor:

1 Scientific quality: The manuscript describes a meta-analysis of the occult HCV infection in the Middle East and Eastern Mediterranean countries. The topic is within the scope of the WJH. (1) Classification: Grade B; (2) Summary of the Peer-Review Report: The most valuable aspect of this work is the lack of such kind of meta-analysis study about this region. However, the abstract has to be shortened; and (3) Format: There are 4 tables and 4 figures. A total of 89 references are cited, including 23 references published in the last 3 years. There are no self-citations.

2 Language evaluation: Classification: Grade B. A language editing certificate issued by NedMedica was provided.

3 Academic norms and rules: The authors provided the Biostatistics Review Certificate, and the PRISMA 2009 Checklist. The authors should provide the signed Conflict-of-Interest Disclosure Form and Copyright License Agreement. No academic misconduct was found in the CrossCheck detection and Bing search.

4 Supplementary comments: This is an invited manuscript. The topic has not previously been published in the WJH.

5 Issues raised: (1) The authors did not provide original pictures. Please provide the original figure documents. Please prepare and arrange the figures using PowerPoint to ensure that all graphs or arrows or text portions can be reprocessed by the editor; (2) PMID and DOI numbers are missing in the reference list. Please provide the PubMed numbers and DOI citation numbers to the reference list and list all authors of the references. Please revise throughout; and (3) The “Article Highlights” section is missing. Please add the “Article Highlights” section at the end of the main text. 6 Re-Review: Not required. 7 Recommendation: Conditional acceptance.

- Thank you very much for your comments and for accepting our manuscript for publication.
- We provided the signed Copyright License Agreement and Conflict-of-Interest Disclosure Form.
- We incorporated the figures in their original format (PowerPoint) so that they can be reprocessed by the editor. We also provided editable Tables and organized them into a single Word file.
- We revised the references according to the “Format for references guidelines”, and edited them using the reference auto-analyser. DOI number was not found for 11 references including 5 journal papers (Ref. 16, 49, 60, 75, and 77), 4 conference abstract (Ref. 70-73), one book (Ref. 12), and one published media (Ref. 1). Regarding PubMed ID, 28 references had no PMID, of which 6 references had no DOI number as well (Ref. 1, 12, and 70-73). All other 22 references were

journal papers (Ref. 5, 6, 16, 25, 29, 30, 34, 37, 42, 49, 51, 54, 56, 59, 65, 67, 74-78, and 83).

- We added the “Article Highlights” section at the end of the main text.
- An audio core trip was uploaded.