

Answering Reviewers

1-The number of cases with cirrhosis and COVID19 is small.

It is true. However, this is an ongoing study and we are continuing collecting data on new COVID-19 infected patients, at our centres. We acknowledge the small number of cirrhotic patients. It has been clearly stated in the final paragraph summarizing the key findings of this ongoing study.

2- No impact of leucopenia was detected in patients with cirrhosis as 50% of subjected with both these negative predictors died and 50% did not. This result is now reported in the letter.

3-Possible occult HBV infection was identified on the basis of antiHBc positivity. A single case of antiHBc positivity was ascertained among HCVAb positive cirrhotic patients with COVID-19 infection.

4- Of course, we can just speculate on the mechanism beyond the protective role of a previous HCV infection: possible background immunity? broad T cell non-specific immune response? We have reworded the last sentence of the abstract in order to avoid the definition of "protective" HCV antibodies against COVID-19