

PEER-REVIEW REPORT

Name of journal: World Journal of Gastroenterology

Manuscript NO: 61015

Title: Progressive liver injury and increased mortality risk in COVID-19 patients: A retrospective cohort study in China

Reviewer's code: 05243186

Position: Peer Reviewer

Academic degree: MD

Professional title: Doctor

Reviewer's Country/Territory: Michigan

Author's Country/Territory: China

Manuscript submission date: 2020-11-21

Reviewer chosen by: Ya-Juan Ma

Reviewer accepted review: 2020-12-08 14:08

Reviewer performed review: 2020-12-20 20:07

Review time: 12 Days and 5 Hours

Scientific quality	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Very good <input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Good <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Grade E: Do not publish
Language quality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Priority publishing <input type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Minor language polishing <input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: A great deal of language polishing <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Rejection
Conclusion	<input type="checkbox"/> Accept (High priority) <input type="checkbox"/> Accept (General priority) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minor revision <input type="checkbox"/> Major revision <input type="checkbox"/> Rejection
Re-review	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Peer-reviewer statements	Peer-Review: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Anonymous <input type="checkbox"/> Onymous Conflicts-of-Interest: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

SPECIFIC COMMENTS TO AUTHORS

Thank you for asking me to review this manuscript. The authors conducted a retrospective cohort study of 440 patients with severe COVID-19 in early 2020 in Wuhan, China, to evaluate COVID-19-related liver injury, and identified several risk factors for liver injury due to COVID-19. I have no major concerns about the methodology of this study. However, I find the authors' conclusion that liver injury inherently worsens survival in COVID-19 questionable and would ask them to justify it more. Predictors of liver injury in COVID-19 have been studied already (PMID 32710250, 32725890, 32283325) including in patients with severe disease (I do not think the authors' comment that "most of the current studies aimed at patients with mild illness", line 124, is fair). That said, this study does go into more detail about some other predictors of liver injury including medications and supplements. Comments: 1. Hepatoprotective medications: can the authors clarify whether these were taken before admission vs. during admission? I find this association surprising as this effect is very large. Could it be it is a proxy for income, adherence to healthcare maintenance, etc.? 2. The authors refer to "individualized tailored surveillance" and also devoted a paragraph to prevention of liver injury (lines 393-402). However, they do not provide evidence that liver injury causes clinically-relevant injury such as ascites, encephalopathy, etc., or that it increases mortality. My opinion is that liver injury in COVID-19 just reflects disease severity, and my reading of the literature is that in patients without advanced liver disease, COVID-19 does not cause liver decompensation. Of course, the authors are welcome to disagree, but I would ask for more justification on why it matters that some patients have elevated liver enzymes. I'm not sure that the hepatoprotective medication argument is sufficient. Minor comments: 1. Lines 341-342: "It is now though that COVID-19 itself is a likely cause of liver injury", I agree that direct infection by SARS-COV-2 can occur but it may

not be the dominant cause of liver disease. Would clarify this statement as this paragraph may otherwise be misleading. 2. The authors collected data through March 2020. Would recommend updating the follow-up date as that was >9 months ago and some of these patients may have died since then. I would at least report mortality within 90 days of diagnosis.

PEER-REVIEW REPORT

Name of journal: World Journal of Gastroenterology

Manuscript NO: 61015

Title: Progressive liver injury and increased mortality risk in COVID-19 patients: A retrospective cohort study in China

Reviewer's code: 00050232

Position: Editorial Board

Academic degree: PhD

Professional title: Assistant Professor, Chief Doctor, Head, Postdoc

Reviewer's Country/Territory: Brazil

Author's Country/Territory: China

Manuscript submission date: 2020-11-21

Reviewer chosen by: Ya-Juan Ma

Reviewer accepted review: 2020-12-21 07:52

Reviewer performed review: 2020-12-22 02:14

Review time: 18 Hours

Scientific quality	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Very good <input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Good <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Grade E: Do not publish
Language quality	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Priority publishing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Minor language polishing <input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: A great deal of language polishing <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Rejection
Conclusion	<input type="checkbox"/> Accept (High priority) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accept (General priority) <input type="checkbox"/> Minor revision <input type="checkbox"/> Major revision <input type="checkbox"/> Rejection
Re-review	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Peer-reviewer statements	Peer-Review: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Anonymous <input type="checkbox"/> Onymous Conflicts-of-Interest: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No



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SPECIFIC COMMENTS TO AUTHORS

THE ARTICLE FULFILLS THE CONDITIONS PUBLICATION,AND CONFIRMS
INITIAL REPORTS OF LITERATUREIN MORE CONSISTENT MANNER. THAT ARE
IMPORTANTIN DISEASE MANGEMENT.N

RE-REVIEW REPORT OF REVISED MANUSCRIPT

Name of journal: World Journal of Gastroenterology

Manuscript NO: 61015

Title: Progressive liver injury and increased mortality risk in COVID-19 patients: A retrospective cohort study in China

Reviewer's code: 05243186

Position: Peer Reviewer

Academic degree: MD

Professional title: Doctor

Reviewer's Country/Territory: Michigan

Author's Country/Territory: China

Manuscript submission date: 2020-11-21

Reviewer chosen by: Chen-Chen Gao

Reviewer accepted review: 2021-01-11 11:13

Reviewer performed review: 2021-01-11 11:20

Review time: 1 Hour

Scientific quality	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Very good <input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Good <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Grade E: Do not publish
Language quality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Priority publishing <input type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Minor language polishing <input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: A great deal of language polishing <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Rejection
Conclusion	<input type="checkbox"/> Accept (High priority) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accept (General priority) <input type="checkbox"/> Minor revision <input type="checkbox"/> Major revision <input type="checkbox"/> Rejection
Peer-reviewer statements	Peer-Review: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Anonymous <input type="checkbox"/> Onymous Conflicts-of-Interest: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

SPECIFIC COMMENTS TO AUTHORS

The authors addressed my comments