

PEER-REVIEW REPORT

Name of journal: World Journal of Gastroenterology

Manuscript NO: 63531

Title: Poor performance of anti-mitochondrial antibodies for the diagnosis of primary biliary cholangitis in female Colombian patients: A single-center study

Reviewer's code: 05916047

Position: Peer Reviewer

Academic degree: MD

Professional title: Doctor

Reviewer's Country/Territory: Japan

Author's Country/Territory: Colombia

Manuscript submission date: 2021-01-29

Reviewer chosen by: Jin-Lei Wang

Reviewer accepted review: 2021-03-16 22:34

Reviewer performed review: 2021-03-17 06:49

Review time: 8 Hours

Scientific quality	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Very good <input checked="" 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 Grade E: Do not publish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 type="checkbox"/> Accept (General priority) <input type="checkbox"/> Minor revision <input checked="" 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



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SPECIFIC COMMENTS TO AUTHORS

General comments: Guatibonza-Garcia et al. conducted a retrospective, cross-sectional study to investigate the diagnostic yield of autoimmune antibodies including anti-mitochondrial antibodies for primary ciliary cholangitis. This is a quite interesting and important study that suggests the possibility of different endotypes of PBC patients in Latin America compared to patients with other geographic background. However, there are many critical issues that need to be addressed/clarified, in order to validate the finding of the current report. Because the conclusion of this study may suggest the need of revision of the clinical procedures for diagnosis of PBC, the finding of the study needs careful validation. Major comments: I am not sure what diagnostic criteria of PBC is used in the authors' country, but I believe the widely accepted criteria are at least two of the three below: 1) pathology; 2) autoimmune antibodies including AMA, AMA2 etc; and 3) elevation of serum liver enzymes, especially ALP. However, the authors' inclusion criteria for current study were solely pathology, which may not be accurate enough to include PBC subjects. The authors need to justify why they adopted pathology-based diagnosis for this study. Otherwise, it should be safe to include patients with pathology consistent with PBC AND elevation of serum ALP as PBC. It is hard to justify that the authors excluded one male PBC subject from the analysis in order to obtain more homogenous population. This is what you should decide as inclusion criteria IN ADVANCE when planning the study design. So, the reviewer suggests the authors include this male subject in the analysis. In another realistic alternative way, the authors may include only female subjects and modify the title of the manuscript so that it clearly shows that the study population was only female subjects. Further, it is unclear if the control group had only female or not. I suppose so based on the description on page 12, Line 5, but this should be stated clearly in the method section. I cannot

understand why you mentioned ROC analysis of AMA and ANA titers. Please clearly state that the titers shown in this section (1:50 for AMA and 1:120 for ANA) are threshold used for the positivity of AMA/ANA if this is the case. As long as I know (at least in my country (Japan) and the US), the threshold for AMA is 1:20. Is this different from the threshold used in your country and/or the current study? If the threshold was different, the positivity and specificity observed in the current study must be affected, which ruins the compatibility of the results in the current study and previous reports. Related with this, what is the definition of positive/negative IgM/IgG? The authors should state the threshold for all the antibodies stated in the study. Based on a previous report that PBC patients in Mexico, the genetic background of which should be similar to the current study, showed high AMA/ANA positivity, the result obtained by the authors needs to be validated by independent cohorts. The authors need to pay careful attention to the reliability of the AMA/ANA tests. Were these tests performed in your hospital or a third-party laboratory? I strongly suggest adding an independent cohort (e.g. patients from other hospital in Latin America) to validate the findings. If the authors cannot agree with this, the authors should modify the title of the manuscript so that it clearly shows that this study is a SINGLE CENTER study for COLOMBIAN population, but not for Latin American population.

RE-REVIEW REPORT OF REVISED MANUSCRIPT

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Reviewer's Country/Territory: Japan

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Manuscript submission date: 2021-01-29

Reviewer chosen by: Chen-Chen Gao

Reviewer accepted review: 2021-04-06 04:49

Reviewer performed review: 2021-04-06 06:26

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Scientific quality	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Very good <input checked="" 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 have revised their manuscript and it reads better than the initial manuscript. The reviewer still thinks they need to further discuss why their finding was different from previous reports from other populations including Mexicans, but this is a sort of limitation of a single center, retrospective study and it is feasible to accept this if the title and main text clearly mentioned this limitation. The reviewer hopes future studies will validate the current report.