Dear reviewers and editors,

We are thankful for your comments and constructive criticism. We hope that following the revision of our manuscript, it will be accepted for publication.

Reviewer 1

Comment 1

In Figure 2, is the p-value supposed to be 0.752? It appears to be “752” in the figure. In the paragraph below Figure 2, it would be better if the acronym O.D could be spelled out as it is used for the first time in the paper.

Answer 1

Thank you for your comment. We revised the p-value in Figure 2. The O.D definition was added to the methods, in "urease activity".

Comment 2

In the Statistical Analysis of Materials & Methods section, it would be better to specify the variables that are used as continuous and categorical variables for this analysis

Answer 2

We added the requested data.

Comment 3

In the sentence in the second paragraph of the discussion section “As only a sample of our isolates were tested for presence of CagA, a higher prevalence of this gene exists among H. pylori strains in Israel may be possible”, does it mean that only selected samples were tested for CagA? This sentence confuses the reader, and it would be better if more clarity could be provided.

Answer 3

We had more than 108 biopsies. However, as you know, *H. pylori* cultivation is very difficult as it requires special conditions and media and therefore we haven't succeed to isolated *H. pylori* from all samples. The 108 isolates enrolled in the study are the first ones that we have succeeded to isolate. Please see "Study population", materials and methods.

Comment 4

In the sentence in the fourth paragraph of the discussion section – "In light of the above, it is important to profile variants in patients in order to assess disease progression", can you please specify the variants discussed here to enhance the understanding of the reader**.**

Answer 4

We added the requested data.

Reviewer 2

Comment 1

The Biostatistics Review Certificate uploaded was made for another article - please upload the correct certificate.

Answer 1

Thank you for your comment. The issue was handled and the correct certificate is now attached.

Comment 2

The Signed Informed Consent Document and the Institutional Review Board Approval Document seem to be the same document, and both are not in english - please review and upload the correct documents with appended English translation.

Answer 2

All our patients are Hebrew speakers. We do not have an English version for these documents.

Reviewer 4

Comment 1

First, as we all know, Helicobacter pylori cannot grow well under "microaerophilic conditions (5% CO2)" conditions, please check whether the culture conditions are written accurately.

Answer 1

Thank you for your comment. We had a mistake in the writing. Please see the answer in materials and methods, bacterial isolation and identification.

Comment 2

Second, in terms of the ID of Helicobacter pylori, the bacterial morphology under the microscope and identification of urease, oxidase and catalase should be added.

Answer 2

Thank you for raising this point. Please see the answer in materials and methods, bacterial isolation and identification and also histology staining and pathology

Comment 3

In the application of MALDI-TOF MS identification method, the description of the version number of the comparison database used should be added, because some earlier versions did not identify Helicobacter pylori with high accuracy.

Answer 3

Thank you, the information was added.

Comment 4

Third, in this study, 108 cases were selected, and 108 strains were isolated. Is the success rate of Helicobacter pylori isolation in the experiment 100%? Proper explanation is recommended.

Answer 4

We had more than 108 biopsies. However, as you know, *H. pylori* cultivation is very difficult as it requires special conditions and media and long incubation. Therefore, we haven't succeed to isolate *H. pylori* from all samples. The 108 isolates enrolled in the study are the first ones that we have succeeded to isolate. Please see "Study population", materials and methods.

Comment 5

The last, In this study, "urease activity was quantified using the rapid urease test (RUT)". The author should explain whether the bacterial growth state and culture time of each isolated strain used to prepare bacterial liquid are the same.

Answer 5

Following bacterial incubation, bacteria were placed in a sterile Eppendorf tube containing sterile physiological solution, until 0.5 McFarland turbidity was reached, which is equivalent to $1.5*10^8$ CFU/ml.