

Dear editor,

We have revised the article in accordance with the modification suggestions.

Reviewer#2: This manuscript presents a significant conclusion, that very low ALT levels may be indicative of higher overall mortality in patients with NAFLD, due to higher incidence of cardiovascular incidents. While there is significant association for patients with ALT < 0.5 ULN, many patients have normal but closer to ULN levels. The authors must state how many patients were in each of the groups according to ALT levels and also present an analysis that shows differences between elevated and normal ALT patients and not just patients with very low ALT. Additionally, the authors showed that higher proportion of patients with normal ALT levels had advanced fibrosis. Can there be an analysis regarding the correlation of ALT levels and level of fibrosis. Also, if this correlation is sound, how do the authors explain that in this study most patients (174/202) with NAFLD and advanced fibrosis have normal transaminases?

Reply: 1. In the baseline table (TABLE 1), we have grouped patients according to normal or elevated ALT levels. Many articles have shown that lower ALT levels were associated to the higher risk of death, which has attracted our great attention. So this article mainly focused on the all-cause and cardiovascular mortality rate of NAFLD patients with different levels of ALT, especially those with ALT < 0.5 ULN.

2. Since NFS is not the gold standard for the diagnosis of advanced liver fibrosis, after thorough discussion with the authors of this article, we have deleted the data related to advanced liver fibrosis this time.

Best regards,

Bo Feng