

COVER LETTER

Dear Editors:

Thank you very much for your letter and for further considering our manuscript entitled **“Probiotics effects on length of hospitalization in mild acute pancreatitis: A randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled trial” (NO: 60459).**

Thank you very much for your letter and further consideration. We also thank all the reviewers for their positive, encouraging and constructive comments. We have revised the manuscript in accordance with the reviewers' comments. All changes have been highlighted in red in the revised version of the manuscript. In the following pages are our point-by-point responses to each of the comments of the reviewers.

We would like to resubmit the revised version of the manuscript for publication in **World Journal of Gastroenterology**. We hope that all these changes fulfill the requirements to make the manuscript acceptable for publication in **World Journal of Gastroenterology**. Should you have any questions, please contact us without hesitation.

Correspondence to

Tong-Wen Sun, MD, Chief Doctor, Professor, Department of Integrated Intensive Care Unit, The First Affiliated Hospital of Zhengzhou University, 1 jianshe east road, Zhengzhou 450052, Henan, China. wanyoudong123@163.com

We shall look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely yours,

Tong-Wen Sun

Revision

Reviewer's comments:

General comment: This work analyze the beneficial effects of treatment with probiotics in patients suffering from mild acute pancreatitis. Previous works have used probiotics in severe, but not mild, acute pancreatitis. Authors found interesting results showing that oral treatment with capsules containing a preparation of *Bacillus subtilis* and *Enterococcus faecium* is able to reduce the length of hospital stay, as well as the abdominal pain relief time and the successful oral feeding time. This is an interesting paper; however, authors should revise several minor points.

Response: We are grateful for the positive comments regarding our paper.

Major comments:

Comment 1: ABSTRACT The following paragraph have an inconsistency with respect to the results: “The probiotics group was associated with a shorter abdominal pain relief time, successful oral feeding time, and a lower rate of recurrent abdominal pain (all $P < 0.05$) than the placebo group. No difference was found in recurrent abdominal pain between the two groups” . I suggest rewriting this sentence: “The probiotics group was associated with a shorter abdominal pain relief time and successful oral feeding time (both $P < 0.01$) than the placebo group. No statistical difference was found in recurrent abdominal pain between the two groups” . Species names (scientific names) should be written in italic (*Bacillus subtilis* and *Enterococcus faecium*).

Response: Thanks for your suggestion. We have change it in the revised manuscript, and species names have been written in italic.

Comment 2: MATERIAL AND METHODS In previous studies in severe acute pancreatitis, other strains of probiotic bacteria have been used, such as *Bifidobacterium* spp. or *Lactobacillus* spp. Whether *Bacillus subtilis* and *Enterococcus faecium* are used in this study for any reason, this

should be given in this section.

Response: Thanks for your suggestion. Considering the safety and efficacy shown in other clinical research(Ref.11, Li SR, Wang HH, Wu ZY, et al. Efficacies of lactulose plus live combined *Bacillus subtilis* and *Enterococcus faecium* capsules in the treatment of functional constipation: a multicenter, randomized, double blind, controlled trial. *Zhonghua Yi Xue Za Zhi* 2012; 92: 2955-60.) we chose a probiotics commercial preparation, a mixed preparation of *Bacillus subtilis* and *Enterococcus faecium*, which has been widely used in China(Meichangan®, national medicine permission number S20030087). We have added this to revised manuscript.

Comment 3: RESULTS In the text of the second paragraph, there are some inconsistencies with respect to data from Table 1. Thus, in this table we can see that 46 females participates in this study from a total of 128 patients. Thus, 82 male is the 64.1 % from total patients and not “66.7%” as it is stated in the text. Please check these data. In the “Secondary End Points” paragraph, two “P=0.01” that appear in the text should be replaced by “P<0.01” In the “Safety and Harm” paragraph, the results are in Table 3, and not in “Table 2” as stated in the text. Furthermore, several percentages showed in the text are not quite correct. For instance, in the probiotic group, 3 patients suffered from abdominal pain: 4.68% from total (64). Therefore, it is a 5% and not 4% from probiotic group. There is a misprint in a P value in this paragraph. In table 3, exacerbating abdominal discomfort shows “P=0.47” whereas in the text appear “P=0.75”

Response: We feel very sorry for our mistake, we have checked all the data again, and fix these errors in revised manuscript.

Science editor's comments:

General comment: (1) I found the authors did not provide the approved grant application form(s). Please upload the approved grant application form(s) or funding agency copy of any approval document(s); (2) I found the authors did not provide the original figures. Please provide the original figure documents. Please prepare and arrange the figures using PowerPoint to ensure that all graphs or arrows or text portions can be reprocessed by the editor; (3) I found the authors did not write the “article highlight” section. Please write the “article highlights” section at the end of the main text; (4) the author should number the references in Arabic numerals according to the citation order in the text. The reference numbers will be superscripted in square brackets at the end of the sentence with the citation content or after the cited author’s name, with no spaces.

Response: Thank you for your kind comments and insightful suggestions.(1)We have uploaded approved grant application form. (2)We have uploaded the original figure documents. (3)We have written the article highlights section. (4)We have check the references.

Once again, we would like to thank your editors and reviewers for all their helpful advice and constructive criticism and we hope that the corrections will meet your standards of excellence!