

Feb 3, 2021

Andrzej S Tarnawski

WJG

Editor-in-Chief,

Dear Dr. Tarnawski

We would like to thank the editors and the reviewers for their positive criticisms regarding our manuscript entitled “Clinical Characteristics, Gastrointestinal Manifestations and Outcomes of COVID-19 Patients in Iran; Does the location matter?” for consideration of publication in WJG.

Below, we answered the reviewer’s comments. We also added the required documents as was requested.

The reviewers’ minor issues:

1 As the authors mentioned, small sample size is the major limitation of this study

We agree with the reviewers, we are planning to collect and add more data for future studies.

2. lack of long-term follow-up data in this study

Long term follow up was not part of this study since the aim, scope and outcome of the study is different. We will consider it for future study.

3. Data related the duration of Gastrointestinal (GI) symptoms was also lacking.

GI symptoms reported in our study related to the admission and early hospitalization. This was added to the discussion.

5 EDITORIAL OFFICE’S COMMENTS

Authors must revise the manuscript according to the Editorial Office’s comments and suggestions, which are listed below:

Science editor: 1 Scientific quality: The manuscript describes an observational study of the clinical characteristics, gastrointestinal manifestations and outcomes of COVID-19 patients in Iran. The topic is within the scope of the WJG. (1) Classification: Grade C; (2) Summary of the Peer-Review Report: This study aims to investigate the Gastrointestinal (GI) symptoms and comorbidities that associate with this pandemic in 4 different regions of Iran. The authors analyzed data from SARS-CoV-2 positive patients evaluated at hospitals of Iran. The results show hypertension and diabetes as the most common comorbidities. Nausea, diarrhea and

elevated liver enzymes were the most common GI symptoms. There was also a high mortality rate that associated with high infection rates in Iran in the beginning of the pandemic.

The questions raised by the reviewers should be answered; and (3) Format: There is 1 table and 7 figures. A total of 31 references are cited, including 23 references published in the last 3 years. There are no self-citations. 2 Language evaluation: Classification: Grade A. The authors are native English speakers. 3 Academic norms and rules: The authors provided the Institutional Review Board Approval Form. **The Biostatistics Review Certificate, and Written informed consent was not provided.** No academic misconduct was found in the Bing search. 4 Supplementary comments: This is an unsolicited manuscript. No financial support was obtained for the study. The topic has not previously been published in the WJG.

We added the Biostatistics Review certificate. There was not written consent form since the study used the chart review.

5 Issues raised: (1) The authors did not provide original pictures. 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; (2) The “Article Highlights” section is missing. **Please add the “Article Highlights” section at the end of the main text;** (3) If an author of a submission is re-using a figure or figures published elsewhere, or that is copyrighted, the author must provide documentation that the previous publisher or copyright holder has given permission for the figure to be re-published; and correctly indicating the reference source and copyrights. For example, “Figure 1 Histopathological examination by hematoxylin-eosin staining (200 ×). A: Control group; B: Model group; C: Pioglitazone hydrochloride group; D: Chinese herbal medicine group. Citation: Yang JM, Sun Y, Wang M, Zhang XL, Zhang SJ, Gao YS, Chen L, Wu MY, Zhou L, Zhou YM, Wang Y, Zheng FJ, Li YH. Regulatory effect of a Chinese herbal medicine formula on non-alcoholic fatty liver disease. World J Gastroenterol 2019; 25(34): 5105-5119. Copyright ©The Author(s) 2019. Published by Baishideng Publishing Group Inc[6]”. And please cite the reference source in the references list. If the author fails to properly cite the published or copyrighted picture(s) or table(s) as described above, he/she will be subject to withdrawal of the article from BPG publications and may even be held liable; and (4) Authors should always cite references that are relevant to their study. Please check and remove any references that not relevant to this study. 6 Recommendation: Conditional acceptance.

Article Highlights” section at the end of the main text:

We added the highlight.

(2) Editorial office director:

(3) Company editor-in-chief: I have reviewed the Peer-Review Report, full text of the manuscript, and the relevant ethics documents, all of which have met the basic publishing requirements of the World Journal of Gastroenterology, and the manuscript is conditionally accepted. I have sent the manuscript to the author(s) for its revision according to the Peer-Review Report, Editorial Office's comments and the Criteria for Manuscript Revision by Authors.

6 STEPS FOR SUBMITTING REVISED MANUSCRIPT

Step 1: Author Information

Please click and download the Format for authorship, institution, and corresponding author guidelines, and further check if the authors names and institutions meet the requirements of the journal.

Step 2: Manuscript Information

Please check if the manuscript information is correct.

Step 3: Abstract, Main Text, and Acknowledgements

(a) Guidelines for revising the content: Please download the guidelines for Original articles; Review articles; and Case report articles for your specific manuscript type (Observational Study) at: <https://www.wjgnet.com/bpg/GerInfo/291>. Please further revise your manuscript according to the guidelines for revising the content.

(b) Format for Manuscript Revision: Please update the format of your manuscript according to the guidelines and requirements for manuscript revision and the format for manuscript revision. Please visit <https://www.wjgnet.com/bpg/GerInfo/291> for the article type-specific guidelines and formatting examples.

(c) Requirements for article highlights: If your manuscript is an original study (basic study or clinical study), meta-analysis, or systemic review, the "Article Highlights" section should be provided. Detailed writing requirements for "Article Highlights" can be found in the Guidelines and Requirements for Manuscript Revision.

Step 4: References

Please revise the references according to the Format for references guidelines, and be sure to edit the reference using the reference auto-analyser.

Step 5: Footnotes and Figure Legends

(a) Requirements for **figures: Please provide decomposable Figures (whose parts are all movable and editable), organize them into a single PowerPoint file, and submit as "62334-Figures.ppt"** on the system. The figures should be uploaded to the file destination of "**Image File**".

A single PowerPoint file submitted as "62334-Figures.ppt."

(b) Requirements for tables: Please provide decomposable Tables (whose parts are all movable and editable), organize them into a **single Word file, and submit as "62334-**

Tables.docx” on the system. The tables should be uploaded to the file destination of “**Table File**”.

A single Word file submitted as “62334-Tables.docx.

Please let me know if you need additional information and thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely

Hassan Ashktorab