

## ANSWERING REVIEWERS

August 25, 2012

Dear Editor,

Please find enclosed the edited manuscript in Word format (file name: 2429-review.doc).

**Title:** Fluctuations in butyrate producing bacteria in ulcerative colitis patients of North India

**Author:** Reena Kumari, Vineet Ahuja, and Jaishree Paul

**Name of Journal:** *World Journal of Gastroenterology*

**ESPS Manuscript NO:** 1245

The manuscript has been improved according to the suggestions of reviewers:

1 Format has been updated

2 Revision has been made according to the suggestions of the reviewer

Q.1 The title is too generic and does not provide any meaningful information regarding the findings described in the report. The term “status” here is too vague.

Ans: The title has been now modified to “Fluctuations in butyrate producing bacteria in Ulcerative Colitis patients of North India”

Q.2 The discussion needs to be extensively reviewed and rewritten. In its present form, the discussion is rather superficial and, in many point, just a summary of the results. No real effort to integrate the findings with the literature data is done. In addition, the relevance of the data for the pathophysiology of inflammatory bowel disease should be discussed. Furthermore, weaknesses of the data should also be discussed. This should include, at least, the fact that most of the microbial data is not presented in absolute values but in percentage therefore it is difficult to assess the real changes in the microbial composition) and secondly that the study is performed in a very restricted population, with clear limitations in the extrapolation to other population.

Ans. Discussion has been reframed on the basis of suggestions made. We have integrated our findings in the light of the current literature. We also highlighted the limitations of the present study.

Q.3 According to the epidemiological data, 12, 6 and 8 patients were included in the severe, moderate and remission groups, respectively. However, the data presented in the figures, in many cases does not seem to include the corresponding number of cases for each experimental group. This must be clarified. The exact number of patients (n) included should be clearly stated for the different part of the results.

Ans. The exact number of patient samples analyzed in each experimental group has been specified in the figures in bracket

Q.4 Most of the supplementary data (Figs S1, S2, S3 and S4) do not give any extra information and do not

add value to the report; and, therefore, should be eliminated.

Ans. As per your suggestions Figs S1, S2, S3 and S4 has been eliminated.

Q.5 Overall, quality of figures should be improved.

Ans : Figures have been modified for better clarity

#### Specific comments

Q.1 Page 3, Introduction, first sentence – Review structure and rewrite.

Ans. The sentence has been reframed

Q.2 Page 5, Line 6 – The obtention and characteristics of the samples tested (faeces?) should be clearly explained. Saying “the sample” is not enough.

Ans. The characteristics of the fecal samples tested have been clearly explained.

Q.3 Page 5, Line 22 – Should be “1 g”

Ans. It has been corrected

Q.4 Table 2 - In its current form, table 2 is not informative. The table should include the relative microbial composition for the four situations tested (control, moderate, severe and remission). It is not clear to which population belongs the data presented in the present format.

Ans. Now the Table 2 has been modified to include microbial composition for the four groups of patients tested- moderate, severe and remission vs. controls.

Q.5 Table S1 – Data for “disease extent” does not cover 100% of the population. This should be corrected including other conditions or at least a “none of the above” group.

Ans. Now we have introduced a category as “none of the above”.

Q.6 Figs. 4 and 5 – Figs. 4 and 5 present the same data assessed through either FISH or qPCR. Therefore, for consistency and comparative purposes, they should be merged in a single figure.

Ans. Fig 4 and Fig 5 have been merged together for comparative purpose.

Q.7 Figure legends – Significances (P values) should be harmonized with the content of the figure.

Ans Significances (P values) have been now harmonized with the content of the figure.

Q.8 Across figures – The way significances are represented is not clear. In some cases the significance is difficult to see because of the colours used.

Ans. Required changes have been made as per suggestion.

3 References and typesetting were corrected

Thank you again for publishing our manuscript in the *World Journal of Gastroenterology*.

Sincerely yours,



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