



**PEER-REVIEW REPORT**

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

**Manuscript NO:** 54114

**Title:** Decreased of BAFF-R expression and B cells maturation in patients with hepatitis B virus-related hepatocellular carcinoma

**Reviewer's code:** 00722239

**Position:** Editorial Board

**Academic degree:** MD, PhD

**Professional title:** Associate Professor

**Reviewer's Country/Territory:** Japan

**Author's Country/Territory:** Thailand

**Manuscript submission date:** 2020-01-27

**Reviewer chosen by:** Ying Dou

**Reviewer accepted review:** 2020-02-03 04:34

**Reviewer performed review:** 2020-02-09 18:52

**Review time:** 6 Days and 14 Hours

SCIENTIFIC QUALITY	LANGUAGE QUALITY	CONCLUSION	RE-REVIEW	PEER-REVIEWER STATEMENTS
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Priority publishing	<input type="checkbox"/> Accept (High priority)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	Peer-Review:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Very good	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Minor language polishing	<input type="checkbox"/> Accept (General priority)	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Anonymous
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: A great deal of language polishing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minor revision		<input type="checkbox"/> Onymous
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Fair		<input type="checkbox"/> Major revision		Conflicts-of-Interest:
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade E: Do not publish	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Rejection	<input type="checkbox"/> Rejection		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

**SPECIFIC COMMENTS TO AUTHORS**



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The authors have investigated the BAFF-R expression and B cells maturation using peripheral blood samples of 50 cases involving patients of HBV infection (with or without HCC) and healthy controls. They found the expression of BAFF-R was significantly reduced in patients with HCC and decreased BAFF-R expression on B cells was significantly correlated with large tumor size and advanced tumor stage. Thus, they considered the depletion of BAFF-R might play an important role in the development of HBV associated HCC. As the roles of B-cells and its maturation on HCC remains unknown and has not been well-investigated, their study design and its results are very interesting. Although the small-sample size is quite limitation in this study, the study itself is well conducted and the manuscript is well-written. I have only one question. The authors insisted that “depletion of BAFF-R is contributable to the development and progression of HBV-related HCC”. However, it is also considerable that depletion of BAFF-R may be not “cause” of HCC development but “result” of HCC development. Namely, developed HCC interfaces the immune system and leads depletion of BAFF-R. How about this hypothesis?

#### **INITIAL REVIEW OF THE MANUSCRIPT**

##### ***Google Search:***

- The same title
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- No

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**Manuscript NO:** 54114

**Title:** Decreased of BAFF-R expression and B cells maturation in patients with hepatitis B virus-related hepatocellular carcinoma

**Reviewer's code:** 00069423

**Position:** Editorial Board

**Academic degree:** FAASLD, MD

**Professional title:** Professor

**Reviewer's Country/Territory:** United States

**Author's Country/Territory:** Thailand

**Manuscript submission date:** 2020-01-27

**Reviewer chosen by:** Ying Dou

**Reviewer accepted review:** 2020-02-13 18:17

**Reviewer performed review:** 2020-02-19 19:31

**Review time:** 6 Days and 1 Hour

SCIENTIFIC QUALITY	LANGUAGE QUALITY	CONCLUSION	RE-REVIEW	PEER-REVIEWER STATEMENTS
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Priority publishing	<input type="checkbox"/> Accept (High priority)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	Peer-Review:
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Very good	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Minor language polishing	<input type="checkbox"/> Accept (General priority)	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Anonymous
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: A great deal of language polishing	<input type="checkbox"/> Minor revision		<input type="checkbox"/> Onymous
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Rejection	<input type="checkbox"/> Major revision		Conflicts-of-Interest:
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade E: Do not publish		<input type="checkbox"/> Rejection		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
				<input type="checkbox"/> No

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This is an excellent study that demonstrated the relation between BAFF-R in B cells and HBV associated HCC. Their first observation of reduced BAFF-R expression in B cells correlating with HCC tumor size and advanced stage not only demonstrated the influence of abnormalities of B cell development in the development and progression of HBV-HCC but also may have opened a new path for designing the therapeutic target of BAFF or BAFF-R for management of HCC. The authors' work is highly commendable.

#### **INITIAL REVIEW OF THE MANUSCRIPT**

##### ***Google Search:***

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