

Dear reviewer:

Thank you for comments on our manuscript entitled “Efficacy of a Chinese Herbal Formula on HBeAg-Positive Chronic Hepatitis B Patients with Normal ALT” (Manuscript NO: 55424). Those comments we received are very helpful for revising and improving our paper. We have studied the comments carefully and made detailed corrections which we hope meet with approval. The main corrections are in the manuscript and the responds to the reviewers’ comments are as follows (the replies are highlighted in blue).

Replies to the reviewers’ comments:

Reviewer 1:

Efficacy of a Chinese Herbal Formula on HBeAg-Positive Chronic Hepatitis B Patients with Normal ALT: A Large, Randomized, Placebo-Controlled, Double-Blind, Multicenter Trial In this study, the authors aimed to evaluate the feasibility and safety profiles of a Chinese Herbal Formula (CHF) as a therapeutic option for chronic HBV infection. 395 patients (30–65 years old) with confirmed HBeAg-positive chronic hepatitis B infection and persistently normal ALT have been included in the study. They found that high rates of HBV DNA reduction, HBeAg clearance and seroconversion could be achieved with CHF treatments. They have concluded that the ability of the compound to modulate host immune function probably contributed to this effect. This manuscript is well written; also the figures and the tables are all appropriate.

Response: Thank you for your careful reading and affirmative support.

Reviewer 2:

It is a well written and comprehensive article. The study is well designed and the results are clear. I think that the authors should add data from previous studies on the efficacy of this herbal on other types of hepatitis B infection. Results : 3.2.2 last sentence .....patients exhibited declines in HBe s Ag and HBeAg .... 6.follow up after drug withdrawal .....however 23 subjects were followed... Do you mean in the control group ??? Do you mean in the control group ???

Response: Thanks for your valuable and thoughtful comments. (1). According to your suggestion, we have added data from our previous studies on the efficacy of ICE formula (page 7-8 ). (2) Results : 3.2.2 last sentence.....Sorry for the mistake. We have changed the term “HBeAg” to “HBsAg” ( page 14). (3) However, in the control group, 23 subjects were followed for 48 weeks, and 36 for 24 weeks; only 1 patient had HBeAg clearance in the control group.during the period of follow up (page 19).

Once again, thank you very much for your constructive comments and suggestions which would help us in depth to improve the quality of the paper.

Kind regards,

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