

Date: 6 December 2013

Dear Editor,

Please find enclosed the duplicate manuscript containing an electronic copy of the full-text manuscript ESPS Manuscript NO: 5569 in Word format.

Title: To treat or not to treat “immunotolerant phase” of hepatitis B infection: A tunnel of controversy

Author: Mohamed A Mekky (Number ID: 00046378).

Dear Editors,

We would like to thank the reviewers for their constructive criticisms, and positive remarks. We have prepared a revision of our manuscript, as per the suggestions given.

In the current version we extensively reviewed the language, grammars, flow of ideas, etc by a native-English speaker (Dr *Helal F. Hetta*, PhD, Department of Internal Medicine, Division of Digestive Diseases, University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, OH, USA), and we acknowledged him in the text for assistance with manuscript preparation and English language editing.

We have incorporated all the changes suggested by the reviewers and would like to give a point-by-point reply to their comments below:

Response to the editor

- 1- English language editing: we sent it to a native English speaker, as mentioned.
- 2- The title: I wish the title in its current style is informative and carry a curious intention that may push the reader to completely read the whole paper.
- 3- Keyword: are added as requested
- 4- Core tip: is added as requested
- 5- References in text: are corrected, as per editor style request
- 6- Headings and subtitles title: are corrected, as per editor style request
- 7- References: are repaired, as regard the PMID and DOI. However, some references are lacking DOI.

Response to the Reviewer #1:

- **The reviewer commented** “we need to more information regarding the search strategy and who the author did the search fro which data bases and with which keywords?”.
Our response: this point was described in the introduction section in the revised version
- **The reviewer commented** “please add about the decreasing the burden of immunotolerent during recent years.
Our response: After a search for the global burden of immunotolerant phase, I found a bizar prevalence that varies from country to another according to the endemicity of the disease. [Liaw YF, Chu CM. Hepatitis B virus infection. Lancet 2009;373:582-92.],[Villa E, et al. Natural history of chronic HBV infection: special emphasis on the prognostic implications of the inactive carrier state versus chronic hepatitis. Dig Liver Dis 2011;43 Suppl. 1:S8-14], [Maddrey WC. Hepatitis B: an important public health issue. J Med Virol 2000; 61: 362-36].

- **The reviewer commented** “ We need meaning the normal ALT
Our response: we added an inferential hint to the normal ALT level in the revised version (ref. NO 31).
- **The reviewer commented** “ we need to more presentation of studies that treated or not treated the patients
Our response: This suggestion is considered in the revised version.

Response to the Reviewer #2:

- **The reviewer commented**, “The manuscript described a controversial but interesting topic in Hepatology. This reviewer suggest to include perspectives for the next future in this particular field (Buchmann P, et al. Vaccine. 2013;31(8):1197-203).
Our response: thank you for this valuable information. We considered this article in our revised version (Ref. No 32)
- **The reviewer commented** there are several typewriting mistakes that need to be amended in the main text and also among references.
Our response: thank you, a great and hard polish was done for the revised version

Signature

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