

ANSWERING REVIEWERS



November 10th, 2013

Dear Editor,

Please find enclosed the edited manuscript in Word format (file name: 5808-edited-11-10-2013).

Title: Useful biomarkers for assessment of hepatitis C virus infection-associated autoimmune disorders

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Name of Journal: *World Journal of Gastroenterology*

ESPS Manuscript NO: 5808

The manuscript has been improved according to the suggestions of reviewers. Because the modification of the manuscript is quite extensive (according to the suggestion from the reviewers), the modified part is hard to be highlighted (nearly all the report). We thus did not specifically underline the parts that have been changed compared to the original draft.

1 Format has been updated

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

(1) Various molecular markers were described in the paper, but the inherent organic links in these markers was insufficient.

Response: Chronic hepatitis C (HCV) is a systemic inflammatory disease with numerous circulating autoantibodies. Our review focused on the evaluation of the correlation between these markers and the clinical manifestations of chronic HCV-infected patients. Indeed, the co-existence of several markers in HCV-infected patients with specific manifestations may be found; for example, the co-existence of anti-nuclear antibody, rheumatoid factor and anti-SSA/anti-SSB antibody in HCV-infected patients with dry eye and dry mouth symptoms. Because the correlation among these markers in HCV-infected patients is not the major focus of this report and the space limitation, the linkage of these markers and possible mechanisms was not included in the report. Nevertheless, because these markers are commonly observed in patients with autoimmune diseases, the linkage among these markers can be obtained in chapters discussing specific autoimmune disorders.

(2) Summary section was not so comprehensive.

Response: We thank the reviewer's very helpful comments on our report. The summary section has been adequately revised to increase its comprehensiveness.

(3) The length of this paper was too long, it is best to make some streamlined.

Response: Both English-writing and the paper length have been greatly polished and trimmed into a more appropriate length according to the suggestion. Because the modification has been quite extensive (nearly all paragraphs of the report) with deletion of much content, it is difficult to mark all these changes. The reviewer can clearly see the difference.

(4) This review claimed that biomarkers that were useful in clinically evaluating autoimmune disorders associated with HCV infection, however, clinical data were not very adequate in the

paper.

Response: We thank the reviewer's thoughtful comment. In this report, we tried our best to include several useful biomarkers to tell the readers about the potentially existing autoimmune parameters in the blood of HCV-infected patients. We also address the significance and importance of these biomarkers that may help to distinguish the possibly co-existing autoimmune disorders from simply HCV infection-related presentations. In considering the length of the report, some clinical data could not be fully discussed and adequately explained. This minor insufficiency should not affect too much the benefit from reading this review.

(5) The figure may not be necessary for the text.

Response: We respect the reviewer's suggestion and have already deleted the Figure 1.

Among three other reviewers, two totally agreed and accepted our report and one disagreed with our report. We were quite surprised to notice that compared to the three reviewers who spent two weeks of reading this report and gave support to this report, the only reviewer who disagreed with this report took only one day to finish reviewing this report and quickly gave a very negative comment. We do think that if the reviewer can spend more time in carefully reading this report, he might find some useful messages delivered from this report.

Before submission, this report has been English-edited by a professional English-editing company as the attached shows. We therefore did not re-submit the revised draft for additional English-editing. However, one of my colleagues with English proficiency help carefully to trim and edit the manuscript before its submission. If the journal considers that it remains to be necessary for additional English-editing, we authors would like to pay for the fee (we authors are not quite sure whether the correction by the English-editing company here is capable of promoting its current status B to A according to the standard of the journal; we therefore request the help from the journal).

Finally, in considering the contribution of individual authors, we decided to delete one author who helps in discussion with only one section of this report.

We thank the reviewers' precious time on reading and correcting our report and gave very useful comments in improving the quality of this report.

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

Sincerely yours,

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