

## PEER-REVIEW REPORT

**Name of journal:** *World Journal of Clinical Cases*

**Manuscript NO:** 75583

**Title:** Prevalence and risk factors for Candida esophagitis among HIV-negative individuals

**Provenance and peer review:** Unsolicited Manuscript; Externally peer reviewed

**Peer-review model:** Single blind

**Reviewer's code:** 05234411

**Position:** Editorial Board

**Academic degree:** MDS

**Professional title:** Professor

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

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

**Manuscript submission date:** 2022-02-06

**Reviewer chosen by:** AI Technique

**Reviewer accepted review:** 2022-02-24 04:22

**Reviewer performed review:** 2022-02-24 04:24

**Review time:** 1 Hour

Scientific quality	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Very good <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Good <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Grade E: Do not publish
Language quality	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Priority publishing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Minor language polishing <input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: A great deal of language polishing <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Rejection
Conclusion	<input type="checkbox"/> Accept (High priority) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accept (General priority) <input type="checkbox"/> Minor revision <input type="checkbox"/> Major revision <input type="checkbox"/> Rejection
Re-review	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No



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**Peer-reviewer  
statements**

Peer-Review: ☒ Anonymous ☐ Onymous

Conflicts-of-Interest: ☐ Yes ☒ No

#### **SPECIFIC COMMENTS TO AUTHORS**

nil

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**Title:** Prevalence and risk factors for Candida esophagitis among HIV-negative individuals

**Provenance and peer review:** Unsolicited Manuscript; Externally peer reviewed

**Peer-review model:** Single blind

**Reviewer's code:** 04068828

**Position:** Peer Reviewer

**Academic degree:** MD

**Professional title:** Doctor

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

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

**Manuscript submission date:** 2022-02-06

**Reviewer chosen by:** Dong-Mei Wang

**Reviewer accepted review:** 2022-04-28 15:19

**Reviewer performed review:** 2022-05-06 13:52

**Review time:** 7 Days and 22 Hours

<b>Scientific quality</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Very good <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Good <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Grade E: Do not publish
<b>Language quality</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Priority publishing <input type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Minor language polishing <input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: A great deal of language polishing <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Rejection
<b>Conclusion</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Accept (High priority) <input type="checkbox"/> Accept (General priority) <input type="checkbox"/> Minor revision <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Major revision <input type="checkbox"/> Rejection
<b>Re-review</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

**Peer-reviewer  
statements**

Peer-Review: [☒] Anonymous [☐] Onymous

Conflicts-of-Interest: [☐] Yes [☒] No

## **SPECIFIC COMMENTS TO AUTHORS**

The authors conducted an epidemiological study for HIV-negative *Candida* esophagitis (CE) retrospectively investigating the database of subjects who had health check-up. They found that the prevalence of CE was 0.4% and four factors such as age, alcohol consumption, steroid use and chronic kidney disease were independently associated with CE. The manuscript is well-written. My comments are as below. Major comments:

1. One subject was excluded due to positive HIV test from the analysis. However, it is unclear whether HIV test was performed for all the study subjects. Please clarify this point.
2. It is vague that steroid use includes what type of administration (i.e. systemic or topical). As the possible effect of acid-suppressive drugs are discussed in the discussion, it would be useful to add data on how many subjects were on PPI.
3. It seems difficult to take biopsies from all lesions suspected of *Candida* esophagitis in the retrospective study. It needs to be addressed that how many subjects have *Candida* esophagitis endoscopically without histological diagnosis.

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**Peer-review model:** Single blind

**Reviewer's code:** 05189966

**Position:** Peer Reviewer

**Academic degree:** MD, MS

**Professional title:** Assistant Professor

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

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

**Manuscript submission date:** 2022-02-06

**Reviewer chosen by:** Dong-Mei Wang

**Reviewer accepted review:** 2022-04-30 19:51

**Reviewer performed review:** 2022-05-12 21:40

**Review time:** 12 Days and 1 Hour

Scientific quality	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Very good <input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Good <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Grade E: Do not publish
Language quality	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Priority publishing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Minor language polishing <input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: A great deal of language polishing <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Rejection
Conclusion	<input type="checkbox"/> Accept (High priority) <input type="checkbox"/> Accept (General priority) <input type="checkbox"/> Minor revision <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Major revision <input type="checkbox"/> Rejection
Re-review	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

**Peer-reviewer  
statements**

Peer-Review: [ ☒ ] Anonymous [ ☐ ] Onymous

Conflicts-of-Interest: [ ☐ ] Yes [ ☒ ] No

## SPECIFIC COMMENTS TO AUTHORS

Thank you for your submission on a commonly encountered endoscopic finding. The authors seek to identify the prevalence of Candida esophagitis among a population of HIV-negative individuals who undergo upper endoscopy and factors associated with Candida esophagitis. They identified a 0.4% prevalence of Candida esophagitis in their HIV-negative population, and the association between chronic kidney disease, steroid use, alcohol consumption. Several similar studies have been published evaluating factors associated with Candida esophagitis. The title, abstract, background, methods, and key words adequately describe the purpose and methods of the manuscript. I have the following questions, comments, and suggestions that I hope will improve the authors' manuscript.

1. The authors purport a 0.4% prevalence of Candida esophagitis in Taiwan. However, it appears that their study was performed only at a single center at Kaohsiung Veterans General Hospital. Extrapolating nationwide prevalence of a condition from a single center is fraught with limitations and may not reflect true population prevalence due to regional variation of infections.
2. One limitation is the small sample size with only 47 individuals confirmed as having Candida esophagitis. Likely as a consequence of this small sample size and associated imprecision, the associations between steroid use or chronic kidney disease and Candida esophagitis have wide confidence intervals.
3. Immunosuppression beyond HIV, such as history of organ transplantation, is an important variable to include in the analysis.
4. The majority of their patients with Candida esophagitis was asymptomatic. There are some data suggesting that treatment may not be necessary for asymptomatic Candida esophagitis, which raises questions about the clinical utility of this information.
5. The



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authors indicated that a questionnaire was filled out for every patient. It would be helpful to better understand the questionnaire. Is the symptom questionnaire a validated instrument? Are symptoms asked in a dichotomous (yes/no) manner or in a scale (always, sometimes, rarely, never)? 6. Was there any missing data? If so, how was missing data handled during the statistical analysis? 7. The authors use total examination fee as a surrogate for socioeconomic status. Does the medical center utilize a sliding scale fee schedule based on income? If so, clarifying this would be helpful as examination fee may vary depending on the types of interventions employed during the procedure. 8. The authors note that a positive HIV serologic test was an exclusion criterion. Did all patients undergo HIV testing? In other words, does this population include patients with confirmed HIV negative serologic test, or does it also include individuals who were never tested for HIV and are thus presumed to be negative? 9. The authors do a good job of discussing their findings in the context of previously published studies. 10. Minor comment: Correct the spelling of "Background" in the abstract.

## RE-REVIEW REPORT OF REVISED MANUSCRIPT

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**Peer-review model:** Single blind

**Reviewer's code:** 04068828

**Position:** Peer Reviewer

**Academic degree:** MD

**Professional title:** Doctor

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

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

**Manuscript submission date:** 2022-02-06

**Reviewer chosen by:** Han Zhang

**Reviewer accepted review:** 2022-06-27 08:07

**Reviewer performed review:** 2022-06-27 08:39

**Review time:** 1 Hour

<b>Scientific quality</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Very good <input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Good <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Grade E: Do not publish
<b>Language quality</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Priority publishing <input type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Minor language polishing <input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: A great deal of language polishing <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Rejection
<b>Conclusion</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Accept (High priority) <input type="checkbox"/> Accept (General priority) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minor revision <input type="checkbox"/> Major revision <input type="checkbox"/> Rejection
<b>Peer-reviewer</b>	Peer-Review: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Anonymous <input type="checkbox"/> Onymous





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statements

Conflicts-of-Interest: [ ☐ ] Yes [ ☒ ] No

#### **SPECIFIC COMMENTS TO AUTHORS**

1. The authors revised the manuscript significantly. On the basis of their response to my comments, the following point needs to be added in the manuscript: the prevalence of esophageal candidiasis calculated for study subjects who underwent HIV test.