

A point-by-point response to Reviewers

Having incorporated the valuable comments from all three reviewers, we are submitting the R2 version of the manuscript in "Editorial" format for a new evaluation (Manuscript NO.: 89299, Editorial). The previous version (R1) incorporates the modifications that were promptly suggested by the Editorial Office, both in the extension of the "Core tip" section and in the format of the references. This R1 version is the one that underwent the first round of peer review.

Both authors appreciate the revisions made. Each of them contributes to improving the quality and clarity of the manuscript. We would like to respond to each comment below:

Reviewer #1:

Scientific Quality: Grade B (Very good)

Language Quality: Grade A (Priority publishing)

Conclusion: Minor revision

Specific Comments to Authors: This editorial article is well-written and offers a current overview of the impact of SARS-CoV-2 on liver cells, and its connection with liver pathologies observed in COVID-19. The article effectively explores topics such as the virus's entry into hepatic cells, potential entry mechanisms, and the roles of hypoxia, the liver's vascular system, and monocyte-derived macrophages in contributing to SARS-CoV-2-associated liver pathologies. However, the manuscript would benefit from a more pronounced statement clarifying that certain liver pathologies, like steatosis, may arise from pre-existing conditions that are not influenced or exacerbated by SARS-CoV-2. Additionally, incorporating a graphical abstract could enhance the presentation by visually summarizing key points and evidences.

AUTHORS' RESPONSE: Your comments are of excellent value, and we especially appreciate them. Therefore, we have incorporated a paragraph accompanied by an updated bibliography that supports it towards the end of the last section, before the conclusions (please see page 15). Similarly, it is certainly convenient to include a graphical summary to facilitate understanding of the main contents and evidence on the subject. We hope that these modifications meet the relevant quality standards.

=====

Reviewer #2:

Scientific Quality: Grade D (Fair)

Language Quality: Grade B (Minor language polishing)

Conclusion: Rejection

Specific Comments to Authors: The manuscript entitled "Molecular mechanisms underlying SARS-CoV-2 hepatotropism and liver damage" offers a narrative of evidence that is available on the possibility of a hepatic infection of SARS CoV-2. However the title is not justified as no molecular mechanism has been provided. No fresh insight has been provided either. Furthermore, similar and better reviews are already available doi: 10.4269/ajtmh.21-1240.

AUTHORS' RESPONSE: The authors appreciate the critical and constructive comment that adds value to the manuscript. We have included the mentioned citation as we share the value of its contents with the readers of this journal (reference #4 in the R2 version).

With the utmost respect, we would like to clarify that this text adheres to the "Editorial" format as invited by the Editorial Office of the WJH. In this regard, according to our knowledge and understanding, it is necessary to express our concept of an Editorial and the clearer differences with a Review. A scientific Review and an Editorial article serve different purposes in the realm of scientific literature. While both scientific Reviews and Editorial articles contribute to the scientific discourse, they differ in their goals, content, authorship, use of references, and tone. A scientific review aims to provide an objective summary and analysis of existing research, while an editorial article expresses the author's opinions on a particular issue.

- Editorial article is generally more opinion-driven. Its purpose is to express the author's viewpoint on a specific issue, often to influence the opinions of the readers or stimulate discussion. Editorials may or may not be based on a thorough review of existing literature.
- Editorial content tends to be more subjective and may include the author's opinions, perspectives, and recommendations. It may not necessarily follow the traditional structure of a research paper.
- Editorial is authored by individuals who may be experts in the field but are expressing personal viewpoints or opinions. The author may or may not have conducted original research on the specific topic.
- Editorial may reference other works, but the emphasis is often on expressing personal opinions, and the references may include a mix of scholarly and non-scholarly sources.
- Editorial tone can be more informal and may include a more subjective or persuasive tone to convey the author's opinions and viewpoints.

=====

Reviewer #3:

Scientific Quality: Grade B (Very good)

Language Quality: Grade A (Priority publishing)

Conclusion: Accept (General priority)

Specific Comments to Authors: Excellent and concise summary. Three small redactional suggestions.

AUTHORS' RESPONSE. The authors appreciate your commendable comments, and they have also incorporated the suggested modifications into the text, highlighting them in yellow, just like each of the changes made in this revised version.

=====