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PEER-REVIEW REPORT

Name of journal: *World Journal of Clinical Cases*

Manuscript NO: 68058

Title: Role of zonula occludens in gastrointestinal and liver cancer

Provenance and peer review: Invited manuscript; Externally peer reviewed

Peer-review model: Single blind

Reviewer's code: 05432788
Position: Peer Reviewer
Academic degree: PhD
Professional title: Associate Professor
Reviewer's Country/Territory: China
Author's Country/Territory: India

Manuscript submission date: 2021-05-10

Reviewer chosen by: AI Technique

Reviewer accepted review: 2021-05-27 03:09

Reviewer performed review: 2021-06-10 09:42

Review time: 14 Days and 6 Hours

Scientific quality	[ ] Grade A: Excellent [ ] Grade B: Very good [Y] Grade C: Good [ ] Grade D: Fair [ ] Grade E: Do not publish
Language quality	[ ] Grade A: Priority publishing [Y] Grade B: Minor language polishing [ ] Grade C: A great deal of language polishing [ ] Grade D: Rejection
Conclusion	[ ] Accept (High priority) [ ] Accept (General priority) [ ] Minor revision [Y] Major revision [ ] Rejection
Re-review	[Y] Yes [ ] No
Peer-reviewer	Peer-Review: [Y] Anonymous [ ] Onymous

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statements	Conflicts-of-Interest: [ ] Yes [Y] No

SPECIFIC COMMENTS TO AUTHORS

Comments To Authors : The authors reviewed the role of ZO proteins in cell proliferation, their expression in (GI) cancer or HCC, and therapeutic intervention targeting ZO in GI and HCC cancer. Altogether, this is a systematic review provides a reasonable overview without glaring omissions or misinterpretations. However, there are some issues that could be addressed to improve the overall quality of the manuscript and suitability for dissemination. 1. The review covers most pertinent aspects of the ZO proteins in cell proliferation and their expression in (GI) cancer and HCC. However, the section of "THERAPEUTIC APPROACH TARGETING ZO PROTEINS FOR PREVENTION OF GASTROINTESTINAL CANCER AND HCC" appears to be underdeveloped. More relevant information should be presented. A published review on this subject could be cited and could help expand this topic (Zeisel M B, Dhawan P, Baumert T F. Tight junction proteins in gastrointestinal and liver disease. Gut. 2019, 68(3): 547–561. doi:10.1136/gutjnl-2018-316906.). 2. The authors discuss many studies about expression of ZO proteins in (GI) cancer or HCC. However, too many examples are listed, it would be useful to summarize them and reorganize. For example, The authors list the relationship between ZO proteins expression and tumor cell differentiation, liver metastasis, high tumor grade, poor outcome, its expression in Caco-2 and T84 cell lines, intestinal permeability in one section. I suggest that the authors should reorganize them again. 3. The authors claim that further studies are needed to develop inhibitors or peptide modulators to examine the specific regulation of the PDZ domain of ZO proteins which can be implemented for cancer therapy, and cerebral ischemia brain injury model is list here. Does ZO proteins function the same in cerebral ischemia brain injury and cancer therapy? Other parts also have similar problems, please check. 4. Manuscript

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could use to be revised for grammatical and spelling errors.