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Flat C, 23/F., Lucky Plaza,  
315-321 Lockhart Road,  
Wan Chai, Hong Kong, China

## ESPS Peer-review Report

**Name of Journal:** World Journal of Gastroenterology

**ESPS Manuscript NO:** 9014

**Title:** Seroprevalence and evolutionary dynamics of genotype 4 hepatitis E virus in Shandong province, China

**Reviewer code:** 00465536

**Science editor:** Ma, Ya-Juan

**Date sent for review:** 2014-01-16 18:32

**Date reviewed:** 2014-02-11 12:49

CLASSIFICATION	LANGUAGE EVALUATION	RECOMMENDATION	CONCLUSION
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A (Excellent)	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Priority Publishing	Google Search:	<input type="checkbox"/> Accept
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade B (Very good)	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade B: minor language polishing	<input type="checkbox"/> Existed	<input type="checkbox"/> High priority for publication
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade C (Good)	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: a great deal of language polishing	<input type="checkbox"/> No records	<input type="checkbox"/> Rejection
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade D (Fair)	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: rejected	<input type="checkbox"/> Existed	<input type="checkbox"/> Minor revision
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade E (Poor)		<input type="checkbox"/> No records	<input type="checkbox"/> Major revision

## COMMENTS TO AUTHORS

Major comments Yang D et al. determined the HEV seroprevalence and performed phylogenetic analysis on HEV-4 genotypes circulating in Shandong province, China. Numerous samples from human beings (serum specimens, n=2028; and stools, n=60) and swine (bile samples, n=82) were tested. The design of the study was well done, full-length genome sequences were obtained for 3 strains (CH-YT-HEV01, CH-YT-HEV02 and CH-YT-sHEV01), the results are well presented and the paper is well-written. My main comments are the following: - I am wondering why the authors did not sequence (at least in ORF2) by RT-nPCR the two serum samples which were positive for HEV RNA. - The discussion may be slightly shortened. The last paragraph of the discussion is not so relevant and should be re-written, emphasizing on the utility of phylogenetic analysis of HEV-4 strains circulating in China, in the South-East Asia region, and finally worldwide. Minor comments - Abstract: the conclusion "and this should be paid more attention" is too vague, general. - Introduction The topic is well presented. However, the last sentence for the aim of the study (including the "transregional" transmission) is somehow not so clear (if you don't read the results section...). So, maybe it's too early to define that in the introduction as an objective. - Material and methods It's very clear. - Results sections According to me, there's a discrepancy between Tables 1 & 2. In Table 2, it was expected to obtain N° of positive IgG samples, N=473+51=524; in fact, it is written 509; also, when the authors are talking about IgM+ samples, are they also positive for IgG? Please clarify. - Tables and Figures 1/ Table 2. Not so useful. 2/ Fig.3. It's necessary but it can be largely improved (more details and scale for people who does know China). 3/ Any additional figures for ORFs analysis? For TMRCA? 4/ I was not able to check Table S5 (as indicated in the last



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sentence of the first paragraph of the discussion). Please clarify.



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**Name of Journal:** World Journal of Gastroenterology

**ESPS Manuscript NO:** 9014

**Title:** Seroprevalence and evolutionary dynamics of genotype 4 hepatitis E virus in Shandong province, China

**Reviewer code:** 00020433

**Science editor:** Ma, Ya-Juan

**Date sent for review:** 2014-01-16 18:32

**Date reviewed:** 2014-02-22 00:39

CLASSIFICATION	LANGUAGE EVALUATION	RECOMMENDATION	CONCLUSION
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A (Excellent)	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Priority Publishing	Google Search:	<input type="checkbox"/> Accept
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade B (Very good)	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade B: minor language polishing	<input type="checkbox"/> Existed	<input type="checkbox"/> High priority for publication
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade C (Good)	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: a great deal of language polishing	<input type="checkbox"/> No records	<input type="checkbox"/> Rejection
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade D (Fair)		BPG Search:	<input type="checkbox"/> Minor revision
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade E (Poor)	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: rejected	<input type="checkbox"/> Existed	<input type="checkbox"/> Major revision
		<input type="checkbox"/> No records	

### COMMENTS TO AUTHORS

The authors have assessed the sero-prevalence of HEV in the Shandong province of China in humans as well as in the swine population. This is a well conducted study, in which the phylogenetic analysis suggested that HEV in Shandong province came from the neighbouring province of Hebei.

I do not have any specific comments for the authors.