

ESPS PEER-REVIEW REPORT

Name of journal: World Journal of Gastroenterology

ESPS manuscript NO: 14778

Title: Assessment of the correlation between serum prolidase and alpha-fetoprotein levels in patients with hepatocellular carcinoma

Reviewer's code: 02537576

Reviewer's country: China

Science editor: Su-Xin Gou

Date sent for review: 2014-10-27 08:50

Date reviewed: 2014-10-30 21:39

CLASSIFICATION	LANGUAGE EVALUATION	SCIENTIFIC MISCONDUCT	CONCLUSION
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Priority publishing	PubMed Search:	<input type="checkbox"/> Accept
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Very good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Minor language polishing	<input type="checkbox"/> The same title	<input type="checkbox"/> High priority for publication
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Good		<input type="checkbox"/> Duplicate publication	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: A great deal of language polishing	<input type="checkbox"/> Plagiarism	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rejection
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade E: Poor	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Rejected	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Minor revision
		BPG Search:	<input type="checkbox"/> Major revision
		<input type="checkbox"/> The same title	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Duplicate publication	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Plagiarism	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	

COMMENTS TO AUTHORS

The author presented a study of the prognostic ability of serum prolidase in hepatocellular carcinoma. In this study, serum prolidase levels are significantly correlated with the tumor size, number and stage of HCC. Meanwhile, the level of prolidase is positive related with AFP, and accompanied with similar results of AFP values in HCC patients. However, it still has some points should be made clear.

1. AFP is considered as a specific biomarker in the progress of HCC, it is associated with the progress of disease and also the patients' clinic outcomes. Prolidase exhibited higher sensitivity and specificity than AFP in predicting the tumor size and number, which are adverse prognostic factors for HCC survival, but it is interesting to know the prognostic value of prolidase in patients' survival, which is a more important and considerable end point.
2. The serum prolidase levels are positive related with AFP levels. In addition, both of them could predict the progress of HCC and are significantly associated with tumor size, number and stage of HCC. What is the significant difference between them in the prognostic prediction?

ESPS PEER-REVIEW REPORT

Name of journal: World Journal of Gastroenterology

ESPS manuscript NO: 14778

Title: Assessment of the correlation between serum prolidase and alpha-fetoprotein levels in patients with hepatocellular carcinoma

Reviewer's code: 02447122

Reviewer's country: Argentina

Science editor: Su-Xin Gou

Date sent for review: 2014-10-27 08:50

Date reviewed: 2014-11-07 02:23

CLASSIFICATION	LANGUAGE EVALUATION	SCIENTIFIC MISCONDUCT	CONCLUSION
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Priority publishing	PubMed Search:	<input type="checkbox"/> Accept
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Very good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Minor language polishing	<input type="checkbox"/> The same title	<input type="checkbox"/> High priority for publication
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: A great deal of language polishing	<input type="checkbox"/> Duplicate publication	<input type="checkbox"/> Rejection
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Rejected	<input type="checkbox"/> Plagiarism	<input type="checkbox"/> Minor revision
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade E: Poor		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Major revision
		BPG Search:	
		<input type="checkbox"/> The same title	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Duplicate publication	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Plagiarism	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	

COMMENTS TO AUTHORS

In the present study, Ilikhan et al. compared serum prolidase activity and AFP values in HCC and cirrhotic patients and, healthy volunteers. They found a significant increase in prolidase activity in HCC patients with respect to cirrhotic patients and controls. Also, prolidase levels showed a significant correlation with tumor size and number. Besides, authors showed that in patients with HCC, there was a significant correlation between the prolidase activity and AFP values in terms of tumor size, number and BCLC staging classification. Major comments: 1. The authors conclude that both serum prolidase activity and AFP levels could be useful in early diagnosing of HCC. But, how the measurement of prolidase activity would be an advantage compared to uniquely determine the levels of AFP? 2. As the authors mention, metastatic tumor cells secrete high levels of proteases that enable them to degrade basement membranes and the extracellular matrix, and thus, invade other tissues. However, the presence of macrovascular invasion was not significantly correlated with serum prolidase, probably because of the reduced number of samples. Therefore, this study would be enriched if more patients with vascular invasion are included. It would be very interesting if the



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correlation between serum prolidase activity and the presence of distant metastasis or other invasive characteristics (incomplete encapsulation, multiple tumor number) in HCC patients were evaluated. Also, authors should analyze patient's survival and recurrence.

ESPS PEER-REVIEW REPORT

Name of journal: World Journal of Gastroenterology

ESPS manuscript NO: 14778

Title: Assessment of the correlation between serum prolidase and alpha-fetoprotein levels in patients with hepatocellular carcinoma

Reviewer's code: 02937214

Reviewer's country: China

Science editor: Su-Xin Gou

Date sent for review: 2014-10-27 08:50

Date reviewed: 2014-11-08 20:50

CLASSIFICATION	LANGUAGE EVALUATION	SCIENTIFIC MISCONDUCT	CONCLUSION
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Priority publishing	PubMed Search:	<input type="checkbox"/> Accept
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Very good	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Minor language polishing	<input type="checkbox"/> The same title	<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"/> Duplicate publication	<input type="checkbox"/> Rejection
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Rejected	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minor revision
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade E: Poor		BPG Search:	<input type="checkbox"/> Major revision
		<input type="checkbox"/> The same title	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Duplicate publication	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Plagiarism	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	

COMMENTS TO AUTHORS

Minor points: 1. The authors should be careful about drawing conclusions of observed results. In Figure 1, the authors just can only get that there is a significant correlation ($r=0.616$; $P<0.001$) between prolidase and AFP values in patients with HCC, but can't obtain the conclusion that prolidase and AFP values are related to tumor size, number and BCLC staging classification and macrovascular invasion. Moreover, it's better to show $r=0.616$; $P<0.001$ in Figure 1. 2. Please analyze the relationship among serum prolidase levels, AFP levels and lymph node metastasis in table 2. 3. AFP is the most commonly used serological marker worldwide for diagnosing hepatocellular carcinoma, but the accuracy and specificity of AFP are not high. The authors should detect serum prolidase and L3AFP level in patients with HCC regarding tumor size, number and BCLC staging. 4. The tumor node metastasis (TNM) system classifies can be used for staging of patients with HCC, why does the author prefer Barcelona-Clinic Liver Cancer (BCLC) criteria.