

PEER-REVIEW REPORT

Name of journal: World Journal of Gastroenterology

Manuscript NO: 46975

Title: On-treatment monitoring of liver fibrosis with serum hepatitis B core-related antigen in chronic hepatitis B

Reviewer's code: 00004603

Reviewer's country: United States

Science editor: Ruo-Yu Ma

Reviewer accepted review: 2019-03-06 16:10

Reviewer performed review: 2019-03-08 02:12

Review time: 1 Day and 10 Hours

SCIENTIFIC QUALITY	LANGUAGE QUALITY	CONCLUSION	PEER-REVIEWER STATEMENTS
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Priority publishing	<input type="checkbox"/> Accept	Peer-Review:
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Very good	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Minor language	(High priority)	<input type="checkbox"/> Anonymous
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Good	polishing	<input type="checkbox"/> Accept	<input type="checkbox"/> Onymous
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: A great deal of	(General priority)	Peer-reviewer's expertise on the
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade E: Do not	language polishing	<input type="checkbox"/> Minor revision	topic of the manuscript:
publish	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Rejection	<input type="checkbox"/> Major revision	<input type="checkbox"/> Advanced
		<input type="checkbox"/> Rejection	<input type="checkbox"/> General
			<input type="checkbox"/> No expertise
			Conflicts-of-Interest:
			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
			<input type="checkbox"/> No

SPECIFIC COMMENTS TO AUTHORS

This is a well performed study, which is also discussed in a clear and detailed way. I do not have problems with this manuscript.



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Publishing
Group**

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INITIAL REVIEW OF THE MANUSCRIPT

Google Search:

- ☐ The same title
- ☐ Duplicate publication
- ☐ Plagiarism
- ☐ No

BPG Search:

- ☐ The same title
- ☐ Duplicate publication
- ☐ Plagiarism
- ☐ No

PEER-REVIEW REPORT

Name of journal: World Journal of Gastroenterology

Manuscript NO: 46975

Title: On-treatment monitoring of liver fibrosis with serum hepatitis B core-related antigen in chronic hepatitis B

Reviewer's code: 03020823

Reviewer's country: Germany

Science editor: Ruo-Yu Ma

Reviewer accepted review: 2019-03-28 07:01

Reviewer performed review: 2019-04-08 11:42

Review time: 11 Days and 4 Hours

SCIENTIFIC QUALITY	LANGUAGE QUALITY	CONCLUSION	PEER-REVIEWER STATEMENTS
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Priority publishing	<input type="checkbox"/> Accept	Peer-Review:
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Very good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Minor language	(High priority)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Anonymous
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Good	polishing	<input type="checkbox"/> Accept	<input type="checkbox"/> Onymous
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: A great deal of	(General priority)	Peer-reviewer's expertise on the
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade E: Do not	language polishing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minor revision	topic of the manuscript:
publish	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Rejection	<input type="checkbox"/> Major revision	<input type="checkbox"/> Advanced
		<input type="checkbox"/> Rejection	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> General
			<input type="checkbox"/> No expertise
			Conflicts-of-Interest:
			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

SPECIFIC COMMENTS TO AUTHORS

Reviewer's comment on the manuscript 46975 - World Journal of Gastroenterology

Title: Serum Hepatitis B Core-related Antigen for Noninvasive Evaluation of Treatment-related Changes in Hepatic Histologic Parameters Chang et al. aimed to

investigate whether serum HBcrAg can be used as simple biomarker. Therefore, in a prospective multicenter study, univariate and multiple ordinal regression analyses assessed variables associated with liver fibrosis progression or regression in chronic hepatitis B patients (CHB), including patients with entecavir treatment for 72 weeks. Concluding, HBcrAg is an excellent monitor of hepatic histological changes, especially in CHB patients treated with nucleoside analogs. Although dealing with a highly interesting topic and a well-structured setup, the manuscript shows structural and content-related deficiencies, impending publication in its current form.

1 Title: The title reflects the main subject of the manuscript, but it is difficult to read and includes a typo. "Noninvasive" is inconsistently written with and without hyphen throughout the manuscript.

2 Abstract: The abstract summarize and reflect the work described in the manuscript.

3 Key words: The key words reflect the focus of the manuscript.

4 Background: The manuscript adequately describe the background, present status and significance of the study.

5 Methods: The manuscript describes methods in adequate detail.

6 Results: The results are adequately described including all detailed scientific information.

7 Discussion: Does the manuscript interpret the findings adequately and appropriately, highlighting the key points concisely, clearly and logically? The authors wrote on page 14 "As described previously, the HBV genotype was strongly associated with the presence of HBV variants[33]. However, we did not find any independent association between HBV genotype and serum HBcrAg level suggesting that HBV genotype is dependent on other factors." This information is not logical. The genotype of the virus might depend on the geographical issues but can not be affected by any host or virus markers. Content of this part does not make sense and need to be revised. The authors wrote on page 14 "These results suggest that selection of BCP/PC mutants affect disease course and explain the HBcrAg level-liver fibrosis dissociation." This term need to be explained and suggestion should be discussed in more detail,

including references linking state of the art literature. Again on page 14 “Not surprisingly, HBcrAg showed a strong negative correlation with liver fibrosis staging in HBeAg-positive individuals, and positive correlation with that in HBeAg-negative individuals. Results corroborate those of Zhang et al[22]. who reported that HBcrAg levels correlated positively or negatively with liver fibrosis staging, irrespective of HBeAg status.” This discussion is insufficient, the HBeAg-related HBcrAg-dependent correlation with fibrosis need to be discussed in more detail! Are the findings and their applicability/relevance to the literature stated in a clear and definite manner? Is the discussion accurate and does it discuss the paper’s scientific significance and/or relevance to clinical practice sufficiently? No, discussion part contains redundant information regarding the results, but insufficient discussion and comparison to current literature. 8 Illustrations/tables: Are the figures, diagrams and tables sufficient, good quality and appropriately illustrative of the paper contents? Figure 1 contains randomized groups treated with RTG or PLC, this need to be clarified. *HBcrAG is a calculated value shown in Figure 5 C and D. These data need to be explained in detail in the text and in the legend. Figure legends Fig.1, Fig. 2 and Fig 4, are insufficient. Information for stand-alone interpretation are needed. 9 Biostatistics: The manuscript meets the requirements of biostatistics. 10 Units: The manuscript meets the requirements of use of SI units. 11 References: Does the manuscript cite appropriately the latest, important and authoritative references in the introduction and discussion sections? More recent literature should be cited, more than 50% of references are 10 years and older. Does the author self-cite, omit, incorrectly cite and/or over-cite references? No. 12 Quality of manuscript organization and presentation: The manuscript is well, concisely and coherently organized and presented. However, enumerations within the manuscript make it difficult to read and to understand (i.e. page 7, inclusion criteria; page 13 strengths of this study, ...) 13 Research methods and

reporting: The Authors should have prepared their manuscript according CONSORT 2010 Statement (Clinical Trials study, Prospective study, Randomized Controlled trial, Randomized Clinical trial). The authors need to go through that list again. In figure 1 represents the study design of a previous published manuscript. Patients are treated with RGT or PLC both groups are not further described or distinguished in the present manuscript. 14 Ethics statements: The manuscript meet the requirements of ethics.

INITIAL REVIEW OF THE MANUSCRIPT

Google Search:

- ☐ The same title
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- ☐ No

BPG Search:

- ☐ The same title
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- ☐ No