

## PEER-REVIEW REPORT

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

**Manuscript NO:** 83594

**Title:** Liver histopathological lesions is severe in patients with normal alanine transaminase and low to moderate hepatitis B virus DNA replication

**Provenance and peer review:** Unsolicited Manuscript; Externally peer reviewed

**Peer-review model:** Single blind

**Reviewer's code:** 06323770

**Position:** Peer Reviewer

**Academic degree:** DO

**Professional title:** Doctor

**Reviewer's Country/Territory:** United States

**Author's Country/Territory:** China

**Manuscript submission date:** 2023-01-31

**Reviewer chosen by:** AI Technique

**Reviewer accepted review:** 2023-01-31 22:54

**Reviewer performed review:** 2023-02-11 23:55

**Review time:** 11 Days and 1 Hour

Scientific quality	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Very good <input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Good <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Grade E: Do not publish
Novelty of this manuscript	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Good <input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: No novelty
Creativity or innovation of this manuscript	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Good <input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: No creativity or innovation

<b>Scientific significance of the conclusion in this manuscript</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Good <input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: No scientific significance
<b>Language quality</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Priority publishing <input type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Minor language polishing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade C: A great deal of language polishing <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Rejection
<b>Conclusion</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Accept (High priority) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accept (General priority) <input type="checkbox"/> Minor revision <input type="checkbox"/> Major revision <input type="checkbox"/> Rejection
<b>Re-review</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Peer-reviewer statements</b>	Peer-Review: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Anonymous <input type="checkbox"/> Onymous
	Conflicts-of-Interest: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

## SPECIFIC COMMENTS TO AUTHORS

This is an important study, given the goal placed by the WHO for CHB by 2030. Recent studies suggest we have significant progress to make in eradicating Hepatitis B virus. This study has a large sample size and significant novelty studying the histopathological findings of patients with CHB with normal ALT levels and identifies the importance of Hepatitis B DNA levels in predicting histopathological severity. The study finds Hepatitis B DNA has excellent performance in elucidating significant histopathological injury in patients even when ALT levels are normal and does suggest the benefit of using of Hepatitis B DNA to determine who will benefit from treatment. Terminology and cutoffs vary depending on the guidelines used (EASL vs CMA) and the authors provide excellent visualization in Figure 2 comparing the EASL and CMA guidelines and the breakdown of findings per the METAVIR scoring system. Generally, grammatical and spelling revision is required before this manuscript can be finalized. I do have some additional specific comments: 1) In the “Aim” of the abstract. I encourage the authors to use a different term than “put forward a suggestion on the scale”. Rather the authors might use the term “impact” or “significance” 2) In the



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“Methods” of the abstract. Please define both EASL and CMA. 3) Please generally list the important factors for determining who should receive treatment for chronic hepatitis B instead of using “etc.”. 4) The authors use both “ $2 \times 10^3$ ” and “2000” when describing HBV DNA levels. Please be consistent per the journal requirements. 5) In the discussion, please provide some reasoning for why the authors think lower HBV DNA levels are associated with higher inflammation and fibrosis. Is there a pathological/biochemical explanation for these findings? 6) Please provide an estimate of the number of the prevalence of patients in the ‘gray zone’. This will add to the importance of your article. 7) Unless this was determined, please list a limitation of the study was that HBV genotype was not determined.

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**Reviewer's code:** 05403123

**Position:** Peer Reviewer

**Academic degree:** MD

**Professional title:** Doctor

**Reviewer's Country/Territory:** Brazil

**Author's Country/Territory:** China

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**Reviewer chosen by:** AI Technique

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**Reviewer performed review:** 2023-02-21 18:02

**Review time:** 8 Days and 18 Hours

Scientific quality	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Very good <input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Good <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Grade E: Do not publish
Novelty of this manuscript	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Good <input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: No novelty
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<b>Language quality</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Priority publishing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Minor language polishing <input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: A great deal of language polishing <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Rejection
<b>Conclusion</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Accept (High priority) <input type="checkbox"/> Accept (General priority) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minor revision <input type="checkbox"/> Major revision <input type="checkbox"/> Rejection
<b>Re-review</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Peer-reviewer statements</b>	Peer-Review: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Anonymous <input type="checkbox"/> Onymous
	Conflicts-of-Interest: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

#### SPECIFIC COMMENTS TO AUTHORS

The research topic is very interesting and challenging. I find it interesting that the authors comment a little on whether the HBV genotype profile may have some influence on the findings found.