

PEER-REVIEW REPORT

Name of journal: *World Journal of Hepatology*

Manuscript NO: 76739

Title: Hepatitis B virus markers in hepatitis B surface antigen negative patients with pancreatic cancer: Two case reports

Provenance and peer review: Unsolicited Manuscript; Externally peer reviewed

Peer-review model: Single blind

Reviewer's code: 03252941

Position: Editorial Board

Academic degree: MD

Professional title: Doctor, Professor

Reviewer's Country/Territory: Japan

Author's Country/Territory: Russia

Manuscript submission date: 2022-03-29

Reviewer chosen by: AI Technique

Reviewer accepted review: 2022-03-30 03:39

Reviewer performed review: 2022-04-01 14:03

Review time: 2 Days and 10 Hours

Scientific quality	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Very good <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Good <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Grade E: Do not publish
Language quality	<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
Conclusion	<input type="checkbox"/> Accept (High priority) <input type="checkbox"/> Accept (General priority) <input type="checkbox"/> Minor revision <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Major revision <input type="checkbox"/> Rejection
Re-review	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Peer-reviewer statements	Peer-Review: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Anonymous <input type="checkbox"/> Onymous Conflicts-of-Interest: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
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SPECIFIC COMMENTS TO AUTHORS

Morozov et al. described two patients with pancreatic ductal adenocarcinoma (PDAC) who were serologically HBsAg negative but antiHBcAb positive. pgRNA and cccDNA were detected in PDAC of subject 1 by RT-PCR and PCR, respectively, and HBxAg was immunohistochemically detected in PDAC of both patients. Thus, they suggested association between HBV infection and PDAC. This is an interesting study that may provide a new perspective on the development of PDAC. I have some comments to improve the manuscript. Major points: 1. (Figure 1) If HBxAg is associated with PDAC carcinogenesis, it should be expressed in all PDAC cells. However, HBxAg is expressed only in a subset of PDAC cells in cases 1 and 2. Please explain the reason. 2. (Figure 1) Ki-67 index looks like nearly 100% in Control and may be misleading. Choice of figures had better be reconsidered. Minor points: 3. (p.3, l.16) pT1G2R0N0LV10 PNI0 in case 1, pT2N0V0Pn1R0TRS3 in case 2: The source of TNM staging, for example UICC or AJCC, should be stated and cited. PNI and Pn1 should be unified and TRS should be spelled out or explained. 4. (p.7, l.26) pT1G2R0N0 LV10 PNI0: Please refer to 3. 5. (p.8, l.9) pT2N0V0Pn1R0 TRS3: Please refer to 3. 6. (p.3, l.11) Beside standards of care: Besides standards of care 7. (p.6, ll.25-28) °C is garbled. 8. (p.7, l.15) LAS X Leica: LAS X (Leica 9. (p.7, l.4) 4% solution of formaldehyde: Isn't this paraformaldehyde? 10. (p.9, l.3) there are only two studies described HBx expression: there are only two studies that described HBx expression 11. (p.9, l.24) seems reasonable: Judging from the context, isn't this "seems unreasonable" or "may not be reasonable?" Please check. 12. (Table 1) "cccDNA, copies/cell x 10⁻⁶" and "Ki-67 index, median (%)": These had better be followed by (pancreatic tissue), too.

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Peer-review model: Single blind

Reviewer's code: 05687852

Position: Peer Reviewer

Academic degree: MD, PhD

Professional title: Doctor, Professor

Reviewer's Country/Territory: Taiwan

Author's Country/Territory: Russia

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Reviewer performed review: 2022-04-08 09:43

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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
Language quality	<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
Conclusion	<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
Re-review	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Peer-reviewer statements	Peer-Review: [<input checked="" type="radio"/>] Anonymous [<input type="radio"/>] Onymous Conflicts-of-Interest: [<input type="radio"/>] Yes [<input checked="" type="radio"/>] No
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SPECIFIC COMMENTS TO AUTHORS

This is an interesting case report to reveal that HBsAg-negative patients with pancreatic ductal adenocarcinoma, in whom the markers of HBV were detected in blood and in the tumor tissue. This reflects potential involvement of the virus in the etiology and pathogenesis of pancreatic ductal adenocarcinoma. 1, All images are highly professional, however I suggest the authors can guide the readers to the meaning of the images appropriately; otherwise, it is likely to cause misunderstandings. 2, Sufficient quality and quantity for Fig1, therefore, the author need perform statistically analyse for these fig. 3, The figure legend requires further revise, and manuscript also needs English proofreading.

RE-REVIEW REPORT OF REVISED MANUSCRIPT

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Position: Editorial Board

Academic degree: MD

Professional title: Doctor, Professor

Reviewer's Country/Territory: Japan

Author's Country/Territory: Russia

Manuscript submission date: 2022-03-29

Reviewer chosen by: Li-Li Wang

Reviewer accepted review: 2022-06-07 01:59

Reviewer performed review: 2022-06-07 14:34

Review time: 12 Hours

Scientific quality	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Very good <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Good <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Grade E: Do not publish
Language quality	<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
Conclusion	<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
Peer-reviewer	Peer-Review: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Anonymous <input type="checkbox"/> Onymous

statements

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

SPECIFIC COMMENTS TO AUTHORS

The authors gave satisfactory responses to my comments. Now I think that this manuscript may be acceptable. However, I noticed some additional points to be considered before publication. Please revise the manuscript before publication. 1. (p.6, l.8) Local Ethic Committee: Local Ethics Committee 2. (p.6, l.9) included detection HBV infection: included detection of HBV infection 3. (p.7) °C and u(micro) are all garbled. 4. (p.8) y.o. and years old had better be uinified. Also, tab.1 and Table 1 had better be unified. 5. (p.10, ll.9-10) Song C. et al. reported... This sentence is grammatically incorrect. Please refer to the following: Song C. et al reported that HBx expression was detected in 10 out of 10 subjects with PC and only three were HBsAg-negative. 6. (legend of Fig. 1) Ki-67 index Control -55: This is strange. Ki-67 index of non-neoplastic tissue is usually less than 5%. Ki-67 index of more than 50% must mean high-grade malignancy. In fact, the authors described that Ki-67 index of PC is up to 12.4% in the Discussion. Please reevaluate Ki-67 index or add persuasive explanation for this.