

16.4.2015

The Editor,

WJG

Dear Sir,

Thank you for considering publication of our invited paper.

We appreciate very much the reviewers' comments and corrected the paper accordingly.

Enclosed please find "point by point" evaluation of the reviewers' comments.

We hope that now the paper is suitable for publication.

Sincerely yours,

Prof. Yaron Niv

## **Reviewer 1**

The paper by Niv entitled "Helicobacter pylori and gastric mucin expression – A systematic review and meta-analysis" is a meta-analysis showing relationship between H. pylori infection and levels of gastric mucins expression.

### **Main comments:**

1. A minor linguistic revision could be useful.

### **DONE (all changes in bold)**

2. A figure illustrating the process of study selection is lacking.

### **Figure 1 added. See changes in figures numbers accordingly.**

3. When reporting a meta-analysis, a model that adheres to "PRISMA" criteria should be adopted.

### **The PRISMA criteria were adopted – see changes in bold.**

4. There is no mention of heterogeneity between studies. The chi square test and the I<sup>2</sup> statistic should be calculated. This is fundamental for the choice between random or

fixed-effects model. ? It is not reported whether a random or a fixed-effects model has been adopted.

**Heteroneity calculation, Q test and the I2 statistic were added, and random effect model was adopted – see page 6, line 11-15, page 8, line 5-7. Also a funnel plot for publication bias was added – Figure 2b.**

5. The author should cite the employed software (i.e. Comprehensive meta-analysis TM), and not the its corresponding website.

**Done – page 6, line 7-8, and Abstract.**

## **Reviewer 2**

Niv presents a well-constructed meta-analysis of studies assessing the effect of Hp on gastric mucin secretion. This study is makes sense of the contradictory results in the literature.

### **Comments:**

1. minor english language polishing is needed. for example "adopted" in the intro should be "adapted". also "active action" is sloppy. more examples can be found throughout.

### **DONE (all changes in bold)**

2. information regarding heterogeneity is lacking (I2)

**Heteroneity calculation, chi square and the I2 statistic were added, and random effect model was adopted – see page 6, line 11-15, page 8, line 5-7. Also a funnel plot for publication bias was added – Figure 2b.**

3. I would like more information regarding how mucin secretion was quantified. this appears only briefly in the methods section, and should be expanded. Furthermore, it should be stated that all studies included in the MA were controlled. (A CONSORT diagram would be useful.)

**Mucin expression and not secretion was measured in the same IMH methods (Page 5, line 14-17).**

**All studies had "case-control design" (Page 5, line 11).**

4. details for the statistical methods as well as software (rather than a website) should be provided.

**Done. Page 6, line 7-12).**

5. the forest plots should indicated "increased MUC5AC" or decreased MUC5AC, instead of "favours A/B", for example.

**Done (see all figures).**

6. The discussion is excellent. Niv elegantly provides a physiological basis for the results observed. Overall well written. Should be published.

**Thanks!**