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Reviewer 1

Different intestinal microbiota may be relevant to same diseases among different persons from different areas and with different dietary habits. The association between intestinal microbiota and DR remains unclear. This study revealed that alteration of gut microbiota was associated with diabetic retinopathy and its progression, and further, this association was mediated by multiple mechanisms. Manuscript is sufficiently novel and very interesting to warrant publication. The Results are presented clearly and authors made a detailed an informative discussion of the results. Furthermore, minor comment that I would to proposed: - Title reflected the main subject of the manuscript. - The abstract summarized and reflect the described in the manuscript. - Key words reflected the focus of the manuscript. - The manuscript adequately described the background, presented status and significance of the study. - The manuscript described methods (e.g., Study Population and Sample Collection, DNA extraction and amplification, Library construction and sequencing, Bioinformatic analysis and Statistical Analysis, etc.) in adequate detail. - The research objectives are achieved by the experiments used in this study. Authors explored the differential bacteria between diabetic patients with DR and without DR, as well as diabetic patients with PDR and NPDR in south Zhejiang and north Fujian in China - The manuscript interpreted the findings adequately and appropriately, highlighting the key points concisely, clearly and logically. - Manuscript included sufficient, good quality Figures and Tables. Please add the explanation of "NS" to the comments on the table. - The manuscript cited a huge of appropriately the latest, important and authoritative references in the introduction and discussion sections. - The manuscript is well, concisely and coherently organized and presented and the style is accurate and appropriated. I recommend accepting this manuscript for publication after a minor language and grammar editing.

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Reply: *Thanks for your kind review and encouragement. I added the explanation of "NS" to the comments on the table and revised my grammar. And further, it is honor for me to publish my paper in world journal of diabetes.*

Reviewer 2

Reconstruction of gut microbiota might be a promising strategy for prevention of diabetic retinopathy. In this interesting study, 16S rRNA gene sequencing was used to evaluate the differences of intestinal flora between DM patients and healthy subjects, diabetic patients with DR and without DR, respectively. In addition, the analysis of the correlation between the gut flora differences and clinical indexes was taken. The manuscript is well-written and gives new information to the DR field. The discussion is adequate and points that the study lacked the detection at species level, as well as the measurement of microbial metabolites and related clinical indicators. Further studies are needed to explore the causal relationship between intestinal microbiota and the development of DR. I am very grateful that the authors cite a very large number of references to explain the association between the gut microbiota and diabetic retinopathy. However, I have noticed that there are relatively few articles in the past two years, and some excellent articles have been published recently in related fields. It would be better if it could be increased.

Reply: *Thanks for your kind review and deep understanding of this article's highlighting points. This is an interesting field which might provide a novel strategy for preventing of DR. And I will go further to do more work on this and hope more and more researchers to join us.*