

Reviewer's report

Title: Human papillomavirus in semen and the risk for male infertility : a systematic review and meta-analysis

Version: 1 Date: 18 Aug 2017

Reviewer: Christophe Depuydt

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"Biological evidences indicate that HPV virions could have been localized at the equatorial region of sperm and affect sperm quality, thereby increasing the risk of male infertility [8]."

(Line 95 - 97).

Different groups have shown that HPV virions bind 2 equatorial regions of the sperm head.

It should be clear for the readers that the HPV DNA measured mostly originates from virions. It would maybe be more appropriate to mention in the introduction or material and methods that the HPV DNA that is measured in semen primarily originates from virions and is infectious (eg p5 line 92). This would allow to use the term HPV prevalence or HPV DNA in tables and text instead of HPV virion prevalence. The problem in writing HPV virion prevalence is that in fact none of the studies measured virions but measured HPV DNA that almost exclusively originates from virions or will be used to build new virions. In rare cases one cannot exclude that the measured HPV DNA originates from clonal HPV infections.

P4 Line 90: the clonal HPV E6/E7 transforming pathway..

P7 line 156; p8 line 180; p9 line 192; p11: HPV prevalence

P8 line 184: 738 HPV DNA positive men

Are the methods appropriate and well described?

If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Does the work include the necessary controls?

If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?

If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?

If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I am able to assess the statistics

Quality of written English

Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Needs some language corrections before being published

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