Reviewer's report

Title: Weak Up-regulation of Serum Response Factor in Gastric Ulcers in Patients with Co-morbidities is Associated with Increased Risk of Recurrent Bleeding

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Reviewer: Peter C Konturek

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Manuscripts by Cheng et al entitled “Weak up-regulation of serum response factor in gastric ulcers in patients with co-morbidities is associated with increased risk of recurrent bleeding” determined the association between immunohistochemical expression of SRF in gastric ulcers and risk of recurrent bleeding. The multivariate logistic regression confirmed that co-morbidities and weak SRF-expression were two independent factors of recurrent gastric ulcer bleeding.

Major comments:

Both NSAIDs and H.pylori, the most important damaging factors of gastric mucosa had no effect on SRF expression. Since SRF plays a central role in ulcer healing, how this phenomenon could be explained? The authors should discuss this issue in context of literature.

What was the positive control for immunohistochemical staining for SRF? Authors should include the positive SRF-immunostaining control in the manuscript.

SRF is an important component of ulcer healing which promotes migration and proliferation of gastric epithelial and smooth muscle cells. Authors should analyse the changes in proliferation index (PCNA or Ki-67) at the ulcer edge in dependence of SRF expression.

Decrease in SRF expression inhibits angiogenesis driven by VEGF, which plays a crucial role in ulcer healing. It would be of importance to investigate this aspect of ulcer healing. Did patients with low SRF-expression had decreased VEGF expression?

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.