Reviewer's report

Title: Effect of Laparoscopic Splenectomy in Patients with Hepatitis C and Cirrhosis Carrying IL28B Minor Genotype

Version: 1 Date: 14 September 2012

Reviewer: José M. Ladero

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Minor essential revisions

1. Virological response (VR) must be defined in the abstract as "response during therapy". The use of this criteria as a reflect of result of therapy is confusing because the gold standard for therapeutic response is sustained viral response (SVR: undetectable HCV-RNA in serum 6 months after the end of therapy). This result must be probably known in all patients and I strongly suggest to the authors to reevaluate their analysis under the scope of SVR, as the clinical interest of this study consists on the repercussion of splenectomy (with or without its effect on the functional role of the analysed polymorphisms) on the definitive results of therapy.

2. The conclusion on the relation between IL28B polymorphism and splenectomy in terms of VR rely on a small number of splenectomized patients (11 cases) and the difference is near the limit of significance. Thus, it seems adequate to consider other baseline prognostic factors for response, mainly viral genotype but also viral load and age.

Discretionary revisions:

1. What was the rate of therapeutic failure due to cytopenias (mainly thrombopenia) in each group? It seems probable that more patients in the non-splenectomy group suffered from extreme thrombopenia during therapy leading to its interruption or at least to a reduction in IFN dosage.

2. The expression "Type C cirrhotic patients" in the abstract may be confusing as it may be interpreted as "Child-Pugh class C". Instead, it should be better "patients with HCV-induced cirrhosis"

3. Page 8, 3rd. paragraph, line 3: < 10^4 or 10^5?

4. Table 2: should it be better to provide date on odds ratio with confidence interval for categorical variables instead the huge p value.

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Acceptable
**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**
No competing interest to declare