Reviewer's report

Title: A retrospective case-control study of hepatitis C virus infection and oral lichen planus in Japan: association with mutations in the core and NS5A region of hepatitis C virus

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Reviewer: Shinichi Imafuku

Reviewer's report:

This paper describes the prevalence of hepatitis C in patients with oral lichen planus and patients without oral mucosal diseases, and higher anti-HCV and HCV- RNA are strongly related to oral lichen planus.

Authors also investigated the IFN-sensitivity–determining region (ISDR) of nonstructural protein 5A (NS5A) of infected HCV, and found no relevance between oral LP and a specific mutation. The conclusion drew here was the same as previously reported with higher risk ratio, but the study revealed more detailed risks.

A minor essential point

The selected controls are people without ANY oral disease from a different population with obvious difference in age. Authors should clarify why this control is selected.

If the authors are to find the prevalence of HCV in LP patients, the control should be better in age and sex matched non-LP (including other oral diseases) patients.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests