Reviewer's report

Title: Predictors of Esophageal Varices in Patients With HBV-related Cirrhosis: A retrospective study

Version: 2 Date: 10 December 2008

Reviewer: Edoardo Giovanni Giannini

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Major compulsory revision

1. The Authors now show Child-Pugh class distribution of the study cohort (n=146) in Table 1. However, the Child-Pugh class distribution of the whole series reflects the C-P distribution of patients with oesophageal varices (i.e., 26%, 50%, and 24%). Likely an error has occurred while computing data. On the basis of data contained in Table 1, prevalence of varices should be 67% in C-P class A patients, 78% in class B patients, and 75% in class C patients. Furthermore, the Authors report that 109 patients had varices, although when they break down prevalence of varices according to C-P classification (A vs B+C) they report 83+25 (=108) patients.

2. Results section, first paragraph, last line: these are not "normal values" for portal vein diameter but rather the pathologic values observed in the study population.

3. The Discussion section is actually too long. The Authors should focus on their results, and discuss the strong and weak points of their study. Indeed, they found a very high prevalence in Child-Pugh class A patients (i.e., 67%), and this likely accounts for the absence of significantly difference for this item.

Minor Essential Revisions.

1. DC (diagnostic accuracy) should be DA in all tables.

2. Page 9, lines 5-13: these statements are a repetition of the results contained in Table 5, and can therefore be deleted without loss of information.

3. "Child-Pugh" should be correctly spelled throughout the whole manuscript.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

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

'I declare that I have no competing interests'