Reviewer’s report

Title: Status on preventing HBV transmission from mother to infant during Pregnancy in China: A retrospective study

Version: 2 Date: 24 May 2009

Reviewer: Paul Schnitzler

Reviewer’s report:

Yan et al. report on the transmission of hepatitis B virus from mother to child in Wuhan City in a retrospective study. This interesting topic mentions features like cesarean section, breastfeeding and combined vaccination. However, several issues mentioned below need to be addressed more carefully and are subject to major compulsory revisions.

1. Several times the author states that cesarean section and breastfeeding have no influence on the HBV transmission to children. Where are their data that support this conclusion, did they compare groups with or without these interruption measures with regard to outcome.

2. The authors conclude, that combined immunization prevents HBV transmission. This is a more general conclusion and cannot be drawn from their data.

3. For intrauterine infection, serum HBsAg is determined 24 h after birth. Usually, the active immunization with HBsAg is administered within 12 h after delivery. If this is the case, the authors might detect the vaccine in the child’s serum.

4. Only a minority of newborns is positive for HBsAb, supposedly after vaccination with HBIG. There is no explanation why the majority is negative for this marker.

5. In the discussion it is mentioned that HBeAg positive women are recommended to breastfeed their babies, unless HBV DNA was detected in the blood test. Most HBeAg positive patients are also positive for HBV DNA, please comment.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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.