Reviewer’s report

Title: Experimental infection of Balb/c nude mice with Hepatitis E virus

Version: 3 Date: 12 January 2009

Reviewer: Volker Thiel

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Overall the manuscript “Experimental infection of Balb/c nude mice with Hepatitis E virus” by Fen Huang et al., appears significantly improved after the revision. The authors addressed most of the concerns adequately. There are some minor concerns that need to get resolved.

Minor Essential Revisions:

1. It still needs to get clearly stated if the entire study in done with a total number of 12 mice. If so, data from each time point (4d, 7d, 14d, 21d) are resulting from one mouse per group. This has to be stated clearly or otherwise clarified.

Whenever experiments are stated to be performed in triplicates (e.g. page 8/9) does this mean the same sample was measure three times, or were samples derived from three different mice? Another example is in figure legend 2 “…represents the average of three experiments…”, are these indeed three experiments or just three measurements?

2. Results, page 8, “The activity of liver enzymes”: The statement “The level of AST was significantly increased” suggests that significance was calculated. If so please indicate the p value in the figure or delete the term significant.

3. Discussion, page 11: Please change the term “fluorescent particles of HEV” and “fluorescent HEV antigen particles”. Particles imply virus particles which are not visible by immunofluorescence imaging. It is rather the HEV ORF2 gene product produced in infected cells that is visualized after IFA.

4. Discussion, page 11: Please correct ALP activities to ALKP activities.

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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