Reviewer’s report

Title: Association of polymorphisms in survivin gene with the risk of hepatocellular carcinoma in Chinese han population: a case control study

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Reviewer: Thomas Wex

Reviewer’s report:

Comments to authors:

the authors investigated the potential role of three gene polymorphisms in the survivin gene for the development of HCC. The study is well conducted and correctly performed. Even the results are primarily negative; data might be valuable in context to latter meta analysis that might finally answer the question, whether these polymorphisms are relevant or not in relation to HCC carcinogenesis. However in its current form, the manuscript contains several shortcomings with respect to the presentation of the data, style, language and format.

- The authors need to shorten the manuscript significantly and focus it solely on the “negative association”. The proposed “protective” genotype combination might be mentioned, but should not discussed in details, since data are simply too weak to draw any conclusion on this finding. The usage of “might perhaps” by the authors reflects the very low confidence of their finding. The shortening should be done in all parts. The working hypothesis at the end of the introduction includes statements about the potential functional role of the investigated polymorphisms in relation to HCC. Since no functional aspect is studied, the authors should clarify that they simply studied the prevalence of these polymorphisms in context to HCC:

- There are numerous mistakes in style, grammar and format (different letter type, sizes, missing spaces after dots or commas, before parenthesis). Furthermore, there are typos like Ppulation, genetypes, moreover, hepatitis, thranslation … The authors have to correct these issues throughout the complete manuscript.

- The presentation of odd ratios needs always the corresponding 95% - confidence interval throughout the complete manuscript.

- The number of the ethical vote for the study should be included.

- Data within the text are not always the same as those presented in tables (e.g. OR of hepatitis B or history of hepatitis.

- The discussion is mostly redundant to the introduction and results. The authors should focus on the interpretation/comparison of their data with other studies.
Functional speculations without having investigated these issues should be omitted.

- The authors might also consider presenting a figure with the PCR products before and after restriction to strengthen their data.

- Table 6 contains identical ORs for HBSAg+ and Ha for all three genetic models. This is not possible.

**Level of interest:** An article of limited interest

**Quality of written English:** Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.

Thomas Wex