Author's response to reviews

Title: The silence of MUC2 mRNA induced by promoter hypermethylation associated with HBV in Hepatocellular Carcinoma

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Journal Editorial Office,

Thank you for arranging a timely review for our manuscript. We have carefully evaluated the reviewers’ critical comments and thoughtful suggestions, responded to these suggestions point-by-point, and revised the manuscript accordingly.

Reviewer: 1 Norishige Yamada

(1) Major Compulsory Revisions:

The authors should provide a valid reason for these changes.

Reply: We considered a long time for authors changes, due to very high processing charge of US$1,945 (RMB 12,448.00) for our manuscript. The three authors (Lu Gao, Rong Li, Lixin Wei: Tumor Immunology and Gene Therapy Center, Eastern Hepatobiliary Surgery Hospital, The Second Military Medical University) agreed to be removed from this manuscript. The other new authors are constructing HBV-transfected cell lines for the next study. Meanwhile, they carried out a bit of experiments about this manuscript. More important, they are providing new funding for the next research. Taking into account of continuity, we agree to authors changes. And the signed copy of Authorship Agreement has been emailed to Journal Editorial Office.

(2) Minor Essential Revisions:

1. Background, line 4 of 4th paragraph: “50 flanking region” should be.
2. Discussion, line 7 of last paragraph: should be “MUC2”.

Reply: We revised the “50 flanking region” and “MUC4” to “5′ flanking region” and “MUC2” accordingly.
Reviewer: 2  Yujing Zhang

1. Authors tested MCU2 mRNA levels and promoter hypermethylation status in 7721, Huh7 and HepG2 three HCC cell lines, but not show the HBV infection status in those cell lines. So it lacks the data on HCC cell lines to support the point: “HBV could play an important role for the loss of MUC2 gene expression in HCC.” It is pretty easy to get the data for the HBV status on three HCC cell lines: 7721, Huh7 and HepG2. Authors should add a paragraph for this issue in Results and Discussion.

Reply: We can not get the data about HBV status on three HCC cell lines now, because these HCC cell lines are not HBV-transfected cell lines. We are constructing HBV-transfected cell lines for the next study.