Reviewer's report

**Title:** Leptin as a critical regulator of hepatocellular carcinoma development through modulation of human telomerase reverse transcriptase

**Version:** 2  **Date:** 1 April 2010

**Reviewer:** Young Nyun Park

**Reviewer’s report:**

Major Compulsory Revisions

The authors studied the biological actions regulated by leptin and its receptors in HCC and the correlation between leptin and human telomerase reverse transcriptase (hTERT). And it was suggested that leptin is a critical regulator of hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC) development and progression through modulation of hTERT. This is considered as a new finding although the authors failed to answer this reviewer’s comments (data about the non-alcoholic fatty liver disease, patients' BMI and metabolic syndrome).

Comments

The authors answered that there was no difference in leptin expression levels between the HBV and HCV subgroups of the HCC group. Actually in this study, 13 HCC tissue samples were investigated and 12 cases were HCV related and only a case was HBV related. Therefore further study using more number of B viral HCC cases is highly recommended.

Statistical review: Acceptable

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

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests