Reviewer’s report

Title: Expression of hepcidin mRNA is uniformly suppressed in hepatocellular carcinoma

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Reviewer: Deng-Fu Yao

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Hepcidin is a key molecule for maintenance of iron homeostasis and is produced in hepatocytes, and binds to, internalizes, and degrades ferroportin-1, resulting in a decrease of serum iron concentration and an increased intracellular iron content.

1. The authors evaluated the expression of hepcidin mRNA in 40 tissues of patients with hepatocellular carcinoma and their non-cancerous tissues by real-time PCR. It is an excellent and interesting work. The question is posed by the authors well defined. The methods are appropriate and well described. The manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition and the discussion and conclusions are well balanced and adequately supported by the data.

2. Hepcidin mRNA is strikingly lower expressed in cancerous and higher in non-cancerous tissues of patients with HCC. Suggesting the uniform suppression of hepcidin may be linked to the development of HCC.

3. The MS could be acceptable for publication except for the part of results (more details).