Reviewer's report

Title: Simvastatin decreases the level of heparin-binding protein in patients with acute lung injury

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Reviewer: Arzu Topeli

Reviewer's report:

This is a well written manuscript about decrease in HBP in ALI after treatment with simvastatin. It might have implications on clarification of pathophysiology of ALI/ARDS and on treatment options. Blood samples obtained from patients enrolled in HARP study were used in addition to 5 healthy control subjects. Their major finding was that HBP levels decreased in patients treated with simvastatin compared to control group. Their other findings were that HBP levels were increased in ALI patients compared to healthy control group and HBP levels decreased from baseline within 7 days during the course of the disease in survivors than non-survivors although baseline values were similar between survivors and non-survivors.

Minor comments

It will be easier to follow the results in the figures especially in figure 2, if scales for HBP were similar (for instance from 0 to 100 ng/mL for all) and if a table is provided for survivors (statin +/-) and non-survivors (statin +/-) where median (percentiles) are given separately for each group.

Major comments

Since this manuscript provides some part of a previous study, more information could be provided regarding correlation of HBP with physiologic parameters obtained from the original study such as extravascular lung water, oxygenation, respiratory mechanic, IL-8 in BAL, CRP, extrapulmonary organ dysfunction, etc. These extra findings might add strength to the study.

Limitations of the study should be clearly defined.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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'