Reviewer's report

Title: The spectrum of thyroid dysfunction in an Australian hepatitis C population treated with combination Interferon-alpha-2beta and Ribavirin

Version: 1 Date: 5 July 2005

Reviewer: Lewis Braverman

Reviewer's report:

General

This manuscript describes the prevalence of thyroid dysfunction in Australian patients with Hepatitis C treated with IFN-α and Ribavirin (Rib). The results are similar to other reports. There are some areas which must be addressed.

1. Pages 5-6: The methods and normal values for TPO and Tg Ab and TSH are not given.

2. What is the prevalence of thyroid antibodies in the euthyroid treated patients?

3. What are the values for the antibodies in the 19 patients with TD since their levels are referred to but not given?

4. The 4 thyrotoxic patients present a problem. Patient 2 should be omitted for many reasons since there is no evidence for Graves disease except MMI therapy -- negative TSI, no goiter, no RAIU and occurred weeks after antiviral therapy.

5. Unfortunately, thyroid radioactive iodine uptakes were not carried out so that the diagnosis of thyroiditis could not be unequivocally confirmed.

6. Page 7 and Table 1: The table title should state that these patients remained euthyroid. How many of these patients had TSH values below 0.4?

7. Page 8, 1st paragraph and Table 2: No mention is made in the text of the prevalence and levels of the thyroid antibodies and what were the values in those with positive TPO and/or Tg antibodies. Also, were baseline values obtained and, if so, did they change during therapy?

8. Table 3 and text: What is the evidence that patient 4 had autoimmune thyrotoxicosis since all antibodies were negative?

9. Page 13, last paragraph: It should be stated clearly that this data refers to their patients.

10. Page 15, last paragraph: Again, where are the TPO Ab?

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

**What next?:** Reject because too small an advance to publish

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

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No

**Declaration of competing interests:**

"I declare that I have no competing interests."