Reviewer's report

Title: Modulation of apoptosis in human hepatocellular carcinoma (HepG2 cells) by a standardized herbal decoction with anti-hepatocarcinogenic effects.

Version: 2 Date: 22 November 2011

Reviewer: Nizar Mhaidat

Reviewer's report:

Ms Carmela Quidoles / Prof Fatma U Afifi
Editorial Board
BMC Complementary and Alternative Medicine
Re: “Modulation of apoptosis in human hepatocellular carcinoma (HepG2 cells) by a standardized herbal decoction with anti-hepatocarcinogenic effects”.

Dear Editor;

Many thanks for your email to review the above referenced manuscript prepared by Dr. Sameera R Samarakoon and colleagues. The following comments were arise after revision:

1. The manuscript is well written.
2. Results meet the author hypothesis.
3. Methods are clear to reader.
4. Author’s hypothesis and study proposal is supported by previous literature findings.
5. The title is meaningful and reflects the study findings.
6. Minor Essential Revision: Author has reported in the discussion section that caspase-3 and -9 are the major caspases being activated by non-receptor mediated stimuli. I think it is largely a system-dependent fact. In melanoma for example, caspase-2 was activated and was the apical caspase following treatment with docetaxel. To exclude caspase-8 and caspase-2 as initiating caspases, I would recommend to syudy the kinetics of these caspases in addition to caspase-3 and -9 to show which caspase is activated first.

Kindest regards

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