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 December 2011

Reviewer: Akiko Kojima-Yuasa

Reviewer's report:

This study demonstrated the modulation of apoptosis in human hepatocellular carcinoma (HepG2 cells) by a standardized herbal decoction with anti-hepatocarcinogenic effects. However, there are several major concerns relating Results and Discussion that should be carefully address by the authors.

Results
The concentration of the extract exposed to cells was very high. Authors should examine the effect of this extract on normal cells.

Authors should measure the cell viability and the ratio of apoptotic cells after 24 hrs and 48 hrs incubation. Did this extract inhibit cell proliferation than induction of apoptosis?

Authors should measure intracellular ROS levels, and discuss about intracellular redox.

Authors should describe the reason why the concentration of the extract was different in each experiment.

Discussion
Authors should discuss about the active compounds in this extract, if possible.

If this extract was also related with inhibition of cell proliferation, authors should discuss the mechanisms.

Figures
Authors should describe the result of statistical analysis.

Miner correct:
Authors should rewrite reference number in text.

Level of interest: An article of insufficient interest to warrant publication in a scientific/medical journal

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the
statistics.