Reviewer's report

Title: Evaluation of direct antiviral activity of Deva-5 herb formulation and extracts of five Asian plants against Influenza A Virus H3N8

Version: 2 Date: 22 March 2014

Reviewer: Jianxin Chen

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After reading the revision the manuscript no. 4774900231141904, I still insist that this manuscript provided very limited valuable information and is not suitable for publication. For assaying the antiviral properties of DEVA-5 and its components, the author determined the viral titer reduction after 30 min incubation in the presence and absence of the extracts of five plants and DEVA-5 in various concentrations. The authors claimed that their results suggested that H. erectum, T. chebula and M. cochinchinensis possess direct antiviral activities at dilutions from 1:3 to 1:14. But this direct in vitro antiviral activities don't mean that they have antiviral effects in vivo. As we know, a number of compounds existing in many plants such as polyphenols have considerable antiviral activities in vitro, but have no effects in vivo. These compounds inhibit viruses usually by a nonspecific but not specific pathway. The authors did not provide any results to testify specific inhibition of the three plants extract on influenza virus. So I can't agree the author's conclusion that H. erectum, T. chebula and M. cochinchinensis could be promising sources of new antiviral drugs.

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

Quality of written English: Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.