Reviewer's report

**Title:** Prevalence of metabolic abnormalities in HBV related hepatocellular carcinoma in Chinese

**Version:** 3 **Date:** 21 March 2011

**Reviewer:** Van Nguyen

**Reviewer’s report:**

I appreciate the authors’ efforts in revising the manuscript. Most of comments from reviewers have been adequately addressed in the revised manuscript. However, there is still a problem with methodology. The authors stated that this is a cross-sectional study but in fact the way study subjects were chosen indicating this is a case-control study. In cross-sectional study, all subjects should be chosen from the same population. In this study, 3 groups were chosen from three sub-populations at different settings. One group was HBV-related HCC and the other two were healthy control and HBV carriers playing as reference groups. Thus, this is a case-control study. However, as selection bias is a major problem in case-control study, matching study subject is often adapted in study design to minimize selection bias. Unfortunately, in this study, subjects in HCC group were not matched with other two groups. Therefore, it would affect the results unless the authors can demonstrate and agreed by a statistician that their data analysis can minimized such issues.

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

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

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests