In the present review article, Thompson et al. summarized the current knowledge on the link between hepatic stellate cells (HSC), the major source of extracellular proteins during fibrogenesis, and hepatocarcinogenesis. In particular, the authors focused on the molecular mechanisms whereby HSC modulate hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC) growth, immune cell evasion and angiogenesis. In addition, the authors describe the mechanistic crosstalk between HSC and HCC, and the novel strategies developed to target HSC for the treatment of human HCC.

The work by Thompson et al. is an excellent, well-written review article on this important topic. The review presents a comprehensive, authoritative review of the existing work in this area. The appropriate references are cited, and all statements of fact accompanied by a reference.

Besides a comprehensive summary, the authors elegantly discussed the most recent strategies and therapeutic possibility of targeting HSC in human liver cancer.

I would kindly suggest the authors few, minor modifications.

Discretionary Revisions:

1. The authors should include a table in which the major molecular targets of the HSC-HCC crosstalk (and the presumable role of these targets) are summarized.
2. The authors should add a scheme where the innovative therapeutic approaches targeting HSC and the related challenges are summarized.

Level of interest: An exceptional article

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.