Author's response to reviews

Title: Measurement of serum procalcitonin levels for the early diagnosis of spontaneous bacterial peritonitis in patients with decompensated liver cirrhosis

Authors:

zhaohua cai MD (dinghg3079_cn@sina.com.cn)
chunlei fan MD (mrfan@163.com)
xin zhang dr (cindy_zhang237@163.com)
wenmin zhao dr (wm1992@163.com)
junfu zheng dr (zhengjunfu1979@foxmail.com)
bing li prof (libingyaye@163.com)
lei li prof (13699119545@163.com)
peiling dong dr (peilingdong@sohu.com)
huiguo ding prof (yhchenta@163.com)

Version: 4 Date: 16 January 2015

Author's response to reviews: see over
Cover letter for revised manuscript

Jan. 15th, 2015

Dear editor,

Thank you for your reply and the reviewers’ important comments again. We have revised the manuscript in light of your suggestion. We are very grateful that the revised manuscript will be accepted for publication.

Modification made by us:

1. Conclusions and Authors’ Contributions sections were added to the manuscript as required.
2. In the text of results section, “Figure 1 A,B” and “Figure 1 C” were changed to “Figure 1”.
3. The highlight color was removed.

Replies to the reviewers:

Reviewer #1: Dr. Marek Hartleb
1. Thanks for your comments. Indeed, in this study, to determine the diagnostic value of PCT in detection of SBP, ROC curves was drawn, and the AUC for PCT was 0.89, which meant the accuracy of the diagnosis test was satisfactory. What’s more, the sensitivity was 68.8% but not 60%, and the specificity was 94.2% at the cutoff of 2ng/ml for PCT (Table 4, Figure 2). Therefore, PCT is acceptable in clinic as a biomarker for the diagnosis of SBP.
2. In fact, it is difficult to early diagnose SBP in clinical practice because ascitic fluid cultures are frequently negative and time consuming. However, it is well known that serum PCT can be rapidly and easily detected as early diagnostic biomarker. So, we mean that PCT measurement is useful for early diagnosis of SBP, rather than diagnosis of early SBP.

Reviewer #2: Dr. Alexander Novotny
I would like to thank Dr. Alexander Novotny excellent review and very important comments.

Sincerely yours,

Dr. Hui-guo Ding, MD, PhD.

Director of Department of Hepatology and Gastroenterology
Beijing You’an Hospital affiliated to Capital Medical University
Beijing 100069, China
Tel: +86 10-8399 7155 Fax: +86 10-6329 5525
E-mail: dinghuiguo@medmail.com.cn