Author’s response to reviews

Title: Comparison of hepatitis E virus prevalenceseroprevalence between HBsAg-positive population and healthy controls in Shandong province, China

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Point by point response

Editor Comments:

(1) In the title authors should add “… in Shandong Province, China.”
Response: The corresponding modification has been made.

(2) Some corrections concern the English style, punctuation and grammar. For examples in the abstract, the word “coummunity” needs to be corrected as page 5 lines 101/102 the term “manufacturer’s instructions”. Page 7, line134 replace “numbers” by “participants” as line 140. Page 8 line 159 replace “copy” by “copies”, line 163 replace “were” by “are” as line
171, as page 9 line 192. Replace “was” by “is” page 9 line 193. Page 11 line 239, add “r” to “live”. The conclusion needs to be corrected for the English style and grammar.

Response: The corresponding modification has been made.

(3) A new check by a native English writer must be carried out.

Response: We are sorry for the poor English writing and a native speaker was invited to edit the manuscript.

(4) Some corrections concern definitions, as page 6 line 114, the definition concerns a chronic hepatitis B and not an “hepatitis”.

Response: The corresponding modification has been made.

(5) In the Material-Methods authors should explain why they chose these four townships and what is the representativeness of these areas in relation to the counties.

Response: The four townships were selected randomly to ensure the representativeness of these areas.

(6) Because the design of the study, “HEV seroprevalence” term should be preferred to “HEV prevalence” term.

Response: The corresponding modification has been made.

(7) The sentence from line 138 to 140 page 7 is not in the adhoc section; it does refer to demographic results.

Response: We agree with you and describe the results in the first part of Result Section.

(8) Concerning HEV and HCC, are the authors certain that a statistical test can be used to compare 1 to 3 participants?
Response: The statistical test has been done over again by Fisher’s exact test and no difference was found in anti-HEV IgM prevalence by clinical type (Line 193-194). Fisher’s exact test could be used to conduct statistical test when the sample size <40 or the expected frequency <5.

(9) Page 11, lines 223-225: the sentence is imcomprehensible
Response: We delete “the possible reason might relate to the sampling time” to avoid confusing the readers.

(10) Some parts of the manuscript need to be simplified as the sections “positive rate of anti-HEV among HBs Ag-positive individuals” and “Comparison of HEV prevalence between CHB group and control group” (in this section discard “and the difference was not statistically significant”, the p value is sufficient.)
Response: The corresponding modification has been made.

(11) Page 11, line 227, the meaning of “a high risk to attack HEV acute infection” requires an explanation.
Response: In the study, 1% participants was found to be positive for anti-HEV IgM in Rushan, indicating HEV acute infection. This is a cross-section study and the blood sample was collected only once from each participant, so the result means a high risk to attack acute infection in Rushan.

(12) Page 11 the sentence from line 235 to line 238 needs to be simplified and rewritten. Page 11 the sentence from line 247 to line 250 needs to be simplified and rewritten. The last part of the discussion (line 251-260) needs to be simplified and improved.
Response: The corresponding modification has been made.