



**PEER-REVIEW REPORT**

**Name of journal:** *World Journal of Gastroenterology*

**Manuscript NO:** 102047

**Title:** Critical Assessment of the Reported Bidirectional Associations Between Gallstone, Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver, and Kidney Stone Diseases

**Provenance and peer review:** Invited Manuscript; Externally peer reviewed

**Peer-review model:** Single blind

**Reviewer’s code:** 05655854

**Position:** Peer Reviewer

**Academic degree:** Associate Chief Physician, Associate Professor, MD

**Professional title:**

**Reviewer’s Country/Territory:** China

**Author’s Country/Territory:** China

**Manuscript submission date:** 2024-10-08

**Reviewer chosen by:** Shang Wu

**Reviewer accepted review:** 2024-11-04 06:04

**Reviewer performed review:** 2024-11-07 07:05

**Review time:** 3 Days and 1 Hour

<b>Scientific quality</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Very good <input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Good <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Grade E: Do not publish
<b>Novelty of this manuscript</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Good <input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: No novelty
<b>Creativity or innovation of this manuscript</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Good <input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: No creativity or innovation



<b>Scientific significance of the conclusion in this manuscript</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Good <input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: No scientific significance
<b>Language quality</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Priority publishing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Minor language polishing <input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: A great deal of language polishing <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Rejection
<b>Conclusion</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Accept (High priority) <input type="checkbox"/> Accept (General priority) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minor revision <input type="checkbox"/> Major revision <input type="checkbox"/> Rejection
<b>Re-review</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Peer-reviewer statements</b>	Peer-Review: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Anonymous <input type="checkbox"/> Onymous
	Conflicts-of-Interest: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

**SPECIFIC COMMENTS TO AUTHORS**

Title: Critical Assessment of the Reported Bidirectional Associations Between Gallstone, Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver, and Kidney Stone Diseases  
 General Comments: This Letter to the Editor provides a thoughtful and well-structured critique of Jiang et al.'s study on the associations between GSD, NAFLD, and KSD. The manuscript falls within the scope of World Journal of Gastroenterology and addresses important methodological considerations in studying these prevalent conditions. Scientific Merit: The letter presents valid scientific arguments regarding the limitations of cross-sectional studies in establishing causality and the challenges of population heterogeneity. The authors demonstrate good understanding of epidemiological principles and their application to gastroenterological research. Strengths: 1. Clear and logical presentation of methodological concerns 2. Well-supported arguments with appropriate references 3. Important implications for future research direction 4. Comprehensive discussion of the clinical relevance Areas for Improvement: 1. The discussion of diagnostic criteria variability could be expanded with specific examples 2. More concrete suggestions for future study designs would be beneficial 3. The implications for non-Chinese



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populations could be elaborated further Specific Comments: 1. Abstract: Well-structured but could be more specific about proposed solutions 2. Core Tip: Effectively summarizes the key points 3. References: Current and relevant, appropriately cited 4. Ethics: No ethical concerns identified Technical Assessment: 1. Structure: Follows journal guidelines 2. Language: Clear and professional 3. References: Properly formatted and recent (2007-2024) Recommendation: Accept with Minor Revision Suggested Revisions: 1. Add specific recommendations for improving diagnostic consistency across multiple centers 2. Include suggestions for potential confounding variables that should be controlled in future studies 3. Elaborate on how the findings might be validated in non-Chinese populations 4. Consider adding a brief discussion of potential biomarkers that could help establish causality The manuscript makes a valuable contribution to the field by highlighting important methodological considerations in studying the associations between these common conditions. The suggested revisions would further enhance its impact and utility for readers. Impact Assessment: This letter will be of interest to gastroenterologists, epidemiologists, and clinical researchers working on metabolic disorders. It provides important considerations for future research design in this field.



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**Peer-review model:** Single blind

**Reviewer’s code:** 05723533

**Position:** Peer Reviewer

**Academic degree:** Associate Professor, MD, PhD

**Professional title:**

**Reviewer’s Country/Territory:** China

**Author’s Country/Territory:** China

**Manuscript submission date:** 2024-10-08

**Reviewer chosen by:** Shang Wu

**Reviewer accepted review:** 2024-11-06 15:06

**Reviewer performed review:** 2024-11-12 16:25

**Review time:** 6 Days and 1 Hour

<b>Scientific quality</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Very good <input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Good <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Grade E: Do not publish
<b>Novelty of this manuscript</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Good <input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: No novelty
<b>Creativity or innovation of this manuscript</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Good <input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: No creativity or innovation



<b>Scientific significance of the conclusion in this manuscript</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Good <input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: No scientific significance
<b>Language quality</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Priority publishing <input type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Minor language polishing <input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: A great deal of language polishing <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Rejection
<b>Conclusion</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Accept (High priority) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accept (General priority) <input type="checkbox"/> Minor revision <input type="checkbox"/> Major revision <input type="checkbox"/> Rejection
<b>Re-review</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Peer-reviewer statements</b>	Peer-Review: <input type="checkbox"/> Anonymous <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Onymous
	Conflicts-of-Interest: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

**SPECIFIC COMMENTS TO AUTHORS**

As a "Letter to the Editor", this letter well critiqued key aspects of the recent article by Jiang et al. Jiang purported substantial bidirectional associations among gallstone disease (GSD), non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD), and kidney stone disease (KSD), based on multicenter cross-sectional studies and a systematic review with meta-analysis. This letter commented that Jiang's findings could significantly impact clinical and preventive strategies; several methodological issues merit closer examination. This letter discussed the heterogeneity of the sample populations, potential confounding variables, the reliance on cross-sectional data which may limit causal inferences, and the generalizability of these results to broader populations given the study's focus on the Chinese demographic. By addressing these concerns, authors aimed to foster a more nuanced interpretation of the associations among GSD, NAFLD, and KSD, advocating for longitudinal studies to validate these findings and enhance their applicability in global health contexts. If the reported bidirectional associations are validated, they could transform current approaches to screening, diagnosing, and managing these common but often compartmentalized diseases. Recognizing



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interconnected pathways may encourage the development of integrated treatment protocols and preventive measures. However, the translation of these findings into clinical practice demands a rigorous validation of the results through methodologically sound research, ideally longitudinal in nature, to confirm these preliminary observations. At last, authors concluded the contributions of Jiang's paper, which provided important preliminary insights into the interconnected nature of GSD, NAFLD, and KSD. However, addressing the concerns of methodological rigor, diagnostic accuracy, and population diversity through well-designed follow-up studies will be crucial for advancing our understanding of these diseases and effectively translating research findings into practice. Therefore, delving into the bidirectional associations among these diseases is not only a pursuit of academic interest but also a crucial step towards a more holistic understanding of metabolic diseases. This exploration could ultimately lead to breakthroughs in how these common and burdensome diseases are predicted, prevented, and treated, thereby reducing their extensive impact on global health.

## **RE-REVIEW REPORT OF REVISED MANUSCRIPT**

**Name of journal:** *World Journal of Gastroenterology*

**Manuscript NO:** 102047

**Title:** Critical Assessment of the Reported Bidirectional Associations Between Gallstone, Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver, and Kidney Stone Diseases

**Provenance and peer review:** Invited Manuscript; Externally peer reviewed

**Peer-review model:** Single blind

**Reviewer's code:** 05655854

**Position:** Peer Reviewer



**Academic degree:** Associate Chief Physician, Associate Professor, MD

**Professional title:**

**Reviewer's Country/Territory:** China

**Author's Country/Territory:** China

**Manuscript submission date:** 2024-10-08

**Reviewer chosen by:** Huo Liu

**Reviewer accepted review:** 2024-11-27 03:15

**Reviewer performed review:** 2024-11-27 07:55

**Review time:** 4 Hours

<b>Scientific quality</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Very good <input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Good <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Grade E: Do not publish
<b>Novelty of this manuscript</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Good <input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: No novelty
<b>Creativity or innovation of this manuscript</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Good <input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: No creativity or innovation
<b>Scientific significance of the conclusion in this manuscript</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Good <input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: No scientific significance
<b>Language quality</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Priority publishing <input type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Minor language polishing <input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: A great deal of language polishing <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Rejection
<b>Conclusion</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Accept (High priority) <input type="checkbox"/> Accept (General priority)



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	<input type="checkbox"/> Minor revision <input type="checkbox"/> Major revision <input type="checkbox"/> Rejection
<b>Peer-reviewer statements</b>	Peer-Review: <input type="checkbox"/> Anonymous <input type="checkbox"/> Onymous Conflicts-of-Interest: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

### **SPECIFIC COMMENTS TO AUTHORS**

The manuscript addresses an important and clinically relevant topic by critically assessing the bidirectional associations among gallstone disease (GSD), non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD), and kidney stone disease (KSD), as reported in a recent study by Jiang et al. The authors provide a thoughtful critique of the methodological limitations of the original study, including issues related to diagnostic variability, reliance on cross-sectional data, and the generalizability of findings. These points are well-founded and highlight critical areas for improvement in future research. The manuscript is well within the scope of the World Journal of Gastroenterology, as it discusses gastrointestinal and metabolic disorders with significant global health implications.