

Answering Reviewers

May, 2024

Manuscript title: Chronic hepatitis B virus infection in eastern Ethiopia: Clinical characteristics and determinants of cirrhosis

WJH Manuscript NO: 93287

Dear Editors and Reviewers

We would like to thank you for your constructive feedback. Your comments and those of the reviewers were highly insightful and enabled us to greatly improve the quality of our manuscript. We have already corrected and edited our manuscript as your suggestion. We provided a detailed point-by-point responses (in red) to each of the comments of the reviewer's as well as Editor's comments as follows:

Specific responses to the reviewer's comment

1. "Aspartate aminotransferase to platelet ratio index (APRI) was calculated from standard blood test results using the following formulas" in "**Laboratory tests**". I recommended to add the FIB-4 value. The FIB-4 score is based on four factors i.e. AST, ALT, platelets, and patient age, which are easily available. As four factors are being used in the equation, it can produce more accurate findings than APRI.
➤ We have added FIB-4 value (Page 10, line number 284-285)
2. "The median APRI value was 0.52 (IQR 0.29-1.35) and 39 (22.3%) patients had an APRI score ≥ 1.5 indicative of liver fibrosis." It is best to describe the values in two groups.
➤ On page 9, line number 291, we have added the APRI values in both group
3. "In multivariable analysis, only khat abuse (AOR 2.81, P=0.003)".It should be 2.86? Please check your data in Table 5.
➤ We have corrected this typing error
4. "HBeAg positivity (AOR 3.81, P=0.022), and HBV DNA viral load >2000 IU/ml (AOR 6.28, P=0.005) were independently associated with cirrhosis (Table 5). It should be 5.29. Please check your data with Table 5.
➤ We have corrected this typing error

5. “However, virologic suppression had been achieved in all of the 15 patients with viral load test data after 24 months on treatment.” 29 patients had completed 24 months of treatment, while 15 experienced suppressed viremia at 12 months. How about the rest of 14 patients?

➤ 29 patients completed 24 months of treatment; at 12 months of treatment viral load test was available for 21 patients, of whom 17 patients experienced suppressed viremia and 5 patients experienced virologic failure. At 24 months of treatment viral load test were available only in 15 patients, all of whom achieved viral suppression. In the remaining 14 patients viral load test at 24 months wasn't determined (page 12, line 339-340).

Best regards,

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