OPEN PEER REVIEW

Open Peer Review (OPR)

As a new feature for progressing towards transparency, we decided to open a new window for all of our editors as well as authors titled "**Open Peer Review**". We hope by this new facility, our reviewers will be more motivated and authors will be more satisfied with the review process. We believe that publishing our peer review reports could make a transparent and clear environment for all our efforts within a journal, but not all reviewers tend to publish their comments.

What is "Open Peer Review" process?

An "Open Peer Review" process is making the details of all review process (including reviewers, associate editors, and EICs comments) as "Public" as it is agreed by EIC, Authors, and reviewers.

Advantages of "Open Peer Review" process

- More transparency, constructiveness and tactful comments of the peer review process: leads to an increase in the quality of reviews
- More motivations for all involved roles in the review process
- Authors' satisfactions from the review process: Increases honesty between authors and reviewers
- Education of both authors and new students
- Prevents reviewers from following their individual agendas and leading to the detection of reviewers' conflicts of interests

You can find out more at:
https://sites.kowsarpub.com/kowsar/knowledgebase/category/tree.html#opr.html

Jundishapur Journal of Microbiology
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Peer Review Report for "Updating the Signal-to-cutoff Level to Reduce Anti-hepatitis C Virus False Positivity"

Author(s): Servet Oztürk, Canan Ağalar

Review Timeline:

Submit Date: 3 Sep 2021
Revised Date: 23 Oct 2021
Accepted Date: 23 Oct 2021

Revision (0)

Here, you can see the **Reviewers**, **Associate Editors** and **EICs'** comments from the beginning to the end of the revision process.

REFEREE: Reviewer | **Revision** (0)

25 Sep 2021

Dear AE,
The reviewer comments are as follow:
1- The manuscript needs correction for grammatical errors.
2- Definitions about patients numbers are very confusing. please concentrate on a specific part of the manuscript and it is much better to notice figure 1 for describing patient categories.
3- Please mention to inclusion and exclusion criteria clearly in the method section, not other parts.
4- Write a clear definition of false positive. how could you define all patients with an anti-HCV positive test and negative PCR test when some factors like low PCR sensitivity to detect low titer of virus and occult hepatitis could be affect results. some patients indicate the occult form of infection and some studies show the presence of virus in lymphocytes.
Thanks.

REFEREE: Reviewer | **Revision** (0)

3 Oct 2021

Dear AE,

Comments for the authors:
- The manuscript requires thorough editing by a native speaker of English.
- Please include the code of ethics in the article.
- Please also state the company and country of manufacture of the used kits.
- Please mention the type of sample used in this study.
- Are the kits used commercial or home- made?
Thanks.

REFEREE: Associate Editor | **Revision (0)** 10 Oct 2021

Dear EIC,
The manuscript entitled" Updating the Signal-To-Cutoff Level to Reduce Anti-HCV False Positivities" needs major revision.
Thanks.

REFEREE: EIC | **Revision (0)** 10 Oct 2021

Dear Authors,
Thank you for submitting your manuscript to JJM. I have completed the review of your manuscript and a summary is appended below (Pleases find attached files). The reviewers recommend the reconsideration of your paper following major revision. I invite you to resubmit your manuscript after addressing all reviewer comments.
1. Please answer point by point to the reviewer's comments on a separate sheet under WORD format and write your modifications in the revised version (WORD format) in colored or highlighted letters.
2. Your answers to reviewers' queries are not only for the Editorial Board but for the readers and should be included, when appropriate, in the manuscript for improvement and a better understanding. Moreover, add line numbers for text and put suitable line numbers for each response.
3. When resubmitting your manuscript, please carefully consider all issues mentioned in the reviewers' comments, outline every change made a point by point, and provide suitable rebuttals for any comments not addressed.
4. In addition, JJM INSTRUCTION is attached to the mail, pleases find it.
5. Please add the ORCID number into you and your collages account, then automatically appear in your published papers in JJM both in HTML and pdf. Pleases follow the below link for the process.
https://sites.kowsarpub.com/jjm/knowledgebase/category/tree.html#orcid.html
Thanks.

OPEN PEER REVIEW

Revision (1)

Reply to Reviewers

Ideally, the reviewing process can significantly improve the submitted manuscripts by allowing the authors to take into account the advice of reviewers. Author(s) must reply to all reviewers' comments in a separate Word file, point by point. A "**Reply to Reviewers**" document is submitted along with revised manuscript during submission of revised files, summarizing the changes that the authors made in response to the reviewers' comments. The responses to reviewers' comments specifies how the authors addressed each comment the reviewers made.

You can read the authors' responses to the reviewers' comments in the next page.

Dear Reviewer 1:
The writer answers are as follow:

Comment 1- The manuscript needs correction for grammatical errors.
Answer 1. Grammatical errors were corrected by the native speaker of English

Comment 2- Definitions about patients numbers are very confusing. please concentrate them in a specific part of manuscript and it is much better to notice to figure 1 for describe patients categories.
Answer 2-After your comment, I realized that it was confusing, especially the number of patients.
I edited and simplified figure-1 and made corrections in the method section of the article.

Comment 3- Please mention to inclusion and exclusion criteria clearly in method section not other parts.
Answer 3: Inclusion and exclusion criteria have been added to the method section

Comment 4- Write a clear definition of false positive. how could you define all patients with anti HCV positive test and negative PCR test when some factors like low PCR sensitivity to detect low titer of virus and occult hepatitis could be affect results. some patients indicate occult form of infection and some studies show presence of virus in lymphocytes.
Answer 4: The definition of false positive was added to the introduction and method section. It was stated with a reference that the distinction between past infection and false positivity could not be made clearly.
As you have noted, low PCR sensitivity may affect the occult Hepatitis C infection results of some patients with low viraemia. However, it was stated in the "Anti-HCV assays and Quantative RNA PCR" part of the method section that the sensitivity of the HCV RNA PCR device we use is very high in accordance with the World Health Organization (WHO) recommendations. In addition, a title named "Definition of false positives" has been added to the method section. Finally, in the "Definition of false positives" part in the method section, it was indicated that there was no evidence of HCV infection in the medical records of the patients.

Dear Reviewer 2:
The writer answers are as follow:

Comment 1:The manuscript requires thorough editing by a native speaker of English.
Answer 1:The manuscript has been edited by a native speaker of English.

Comment 2: Please include the code of ethics in the article.
Answer 2: I added the code of ethics to the "declaration of ethical aspect" of the method section of the article.

Comment 3:Please also state the company and country of manufacture of the used kits.
Answer 3: The Architect Anti-HCV reagent kit (Abbott Company, Germany) was used. This information has been added to the method section

Comment 4: Please mention the type of sample used in this study.
Answer 4: It was stated in the first sentence of the method section that the study was cross-sectional.

Comment 5: Are the kits used commercial or home- made?
Answer 5:The information that the kits used are commercial has been added to the method section.

Associate Editor's Comments:
Associate Editor 1:
The manuscript entitled" Updating the Signal-To-Cutoff Level to Reduce Anti-HCV False Positivities" needs major revision.

EIC Decision:
Thank you for submitting your manuscript to JJM. I have completed the review of your manuscript and a summary is appended below (Pleases find attached files). The reviewers recommend the reconsideration of your paper following major revision. I invite you to resubmit your manuscript after addressing all reviewer comments.
1. Please answer point by point to the reviewer's comments on a separate sheet under WORD format and write your modifications in the revised version (WORD format) in colored or highlighted letters.
1-I replied to the revised comments point by point on a separate page in WORD format and wrote the changes in colored letters in the revised version (in WORD format)

2. Your: answers to reviewers' queries are not only for the Editorial Board but for the readers and should be included, when appropriate, in the manuscript for improvement and a better understanding. Moreover, add line numbers for text and put suitable line numbers for each response.
2-The answers to the reviewers questions are included in the article. Also added line numbers for text.

3. When resubmitting your manuscript, please carefully consider all issues mentioned in the reviewers' comments, outline every change made a point by point, and provide suitable rebuttals for any comments not addressed.
3-All aspects mentioned in the reviewers' comments were carefully considered and each change that has been made was outlined.

4. In addition, JJM INSTRUCTION is attached to the mail, pleases find it.

5. Please add the ORCID number into you and your collages account, then automatically appear in your published papers in JJM both in HTML and pdf. Pleases follow the below link for the process.
https://sites.kowsarpub.com/jjm/knowledgebase/category/tree.html#orcid.html
5- ORCID accounts and mails have been made visible and added to the account.

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Revision (1)

Here, you can see the **Reviewers**, **Associate Editors** and **EICs'** comments from the beginning to the end of the revision process.

REFEREE: Associate Editor | **Revision** (1) 23 Oct 2021

Dear EIC
The manuscript was completely revised based on reviewers and associated editor comments and it is acceptable for publishing in JJM.
Regards

REFEREE: EIC | **Revision** (1) 23 Oct 2021

Dear Authors,
I am pleased to inform you that your manuscript has been accepted for publication in the JJM. Your accepted manuscript will now be transferred to our production department. If we need additional information from you during the production process, we will contact you directly. Please remember to always include your manuscript number, whenever inquiring about your manuscript. We will create a proof which you will be asked to check. When you receive the proof, please check all names and affiliations very carefully, as these cannot be corrected once the article is published. Moreover, please add the ORCID number to you and your collages account as soon as possible. For more details
https://sites.kowsarpub.com/jjm/knowledgebase/category/tree.html#orcid.html
We appreciate you submitting your manuscript to JJM and hope you will consider us again for future submissions.
Thanks