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OPEN PEER REVIEW

Seroprevalence of *Toxoplasma gondii* Infection in Cancer Patients in Southwest Iran: A Case-Control Study

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About this report

This open peer review (OPR) report shows the public comments made on this article during peer review, by the reviewers, the associate editor and the editor-in-chief, for every revision round, together with the authors' replies. Comments appear only with the consent of the people who wrote them. Reviewers who chose to sign their report are named; the others are shown as "Referee". Comments are edited for language only, and confidential remarks to the editors are not included.

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1 Original submission

0 comments

No public comments in this round.

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Revision 1

AUTHORS' RESPONSE TO REVIEWERS

Authors' reply to reviewers

The next pages contain the authors' point-by-point reply to the comments of this revision round, as submitted with the revised manuscript. It is published as the authors wrote it.

Dear Editor in chief

We would like to thank the reviewers for their detailed feedback to improve our submission. We are submitting a revised version of our manuscript entitled "**Seroprevalence of *Toxoplasma gondii* infection in cancer patients in Southwest Iran: A case-control study**". As a result, the manuscript has undergone a revision with some details indicated below in our response to individual comments.

All comments applied to the paper with descriptions for some of them as following:

Reviewer 1:

Introduction:
1. Please improve the introduction part with academic and scientific English writing.

Response: Thanks for your comment. We have thoroughly revised and improved the introduction part to improve its scientific and academic writing.

Methods:
1. For each variable of interest give sources of data and details of methods of assessment (measurement). Describe comparability of assessment methods if there is more than one group. Give information separately for cases and controls.

Response: Was added in method section.

2. Describe any efforts to address potential sources of bias

Response: To minimize bias, both the case and control group were chosen from similar geographical, cultural, and clinical context. Also, the case and control groups were matched for age and gender

3. Describe any sensitivity analyses

Response: Collected laboratory results and questionnaire were analyzed using SPSS software version 21. Variables were compared using the Chi-square test, and Fisher's exact test. A p- value of less than 0.05 was considered statistically significant.

4. Report other analyses done—e.g., analyses of subgroups and interactions, and sensitivity analyses

Response: All analyses procedures were discussed above.

Results:
1. Please improve the results part with academic and scientific English writing.

Response: We have thoroughly revised and improved the results part.

2. Report other analyses done—e.g., analyses of subgroups and interactions, and sensitivity analyses.

Response: Not performed.

Discussion:
1. Discuss limitations of the study, taking into account sources of potential bias or imprecision. Discuss both direction and magnitude of any potential bias.

Response: The low prevalence rate of IgM positivity may have reduced the statistical ability to detect significant differences in active infection between study groups. Although the control group was recruited from the same hospitals, unrecorded differences in their lifestyle or immune status may have affected the study findings. The diagnosis of infection relied only on ELISA testing without molecular methods like PCR, which might have improved diagnostic accuracy, particularly for detecting active or recent infections.

2. Please improve the Discussion part with academic and scientific English writing.

Response: Thank you for your comment. We have thoroughly revised and improved the Discussion section.

2 Revision 1

3 comments · 2 Jul 2025 – 8 Jul 2025

Referee 1 Reviewer

MINOR REVISION 2 Jul 2025

Dear Authors,

Thank you for your resubmission and for thoroughly addressing the majority of the comments raised in the previous review. Your revisions have clearly improved the manuscript.

However, there are two remaining points that should be addressed to further enhance the clarity and completeness of your work:

1. Please consider adding the following sentence to the Methods or Discussion section to clarify the scope of your analysis:
"No sensitivity or interaction analyses were performed due to the cross-sectional nature and primary objective of the study."

2. While you have mentioned that all analyses were conducted, no subgroup or interaction analyses are reported in the manuscript beyond the basic comparisons.
If feasible, please include any relevant interaction analyses (e.g., gender × place of residence or cancer type × age). If such analyses are not possible due to sample size or study design, kindly state this explicitly in the manuscript.

We believe addressing these points will further strengthen the scientific rigor and transparency of your study.

Best regards

Associate Editor

MINOR REVISION 8 Jul 2025

Public Comment:
Dear Authors,
Thank you for your resubmission and for thoroughly addressing the majority of the comments raised in the previous review. Your revisions have clearly improved the manuscript.
However, there are two remaining points that should be addressed to further enhance the clarity and completeness of your work:
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We believe addressing these points will further strengthen the scientific rigor and transparency of your study.
Best regards

Decision:
Minor revision

OPR Status:
2) Anonymous Reviewer:

Editor-in-Chief MINOR REVISION 8 Jul 2025

Minor Revision

3

Revision 2

AUTHORS' RESPONSE TO REVIEWERS

Authors' reply to reviewers

The next pages contain the authors' point-by-point reply to the comments of this revision round, as submitted with the revised manuscript. It is published as the authors wrote it.

Dear Authors,
Thank you for your resubmission and for thoroughly addressing the majority of the comments raised in the previous review. Your revisions have clearly improved the manuscript.
However, there are two remaining points that should be addressed to further enhance the clarity and completeness of your work:
1. Please consider adding the following sentence to the Methods or Discussion section to clarify the scope of your analysis:
"No sensitivity or interaction analyses were performed due to the cross-sectional nature and primary objective of the study."

Response: Was added in methods (Section 2.5. Data analysis).

2. While you have mentioned that all analyses were conducted, no subgroup or interaction analyses are reported in the manuscript beyond the basic comparisons.
If feasible, please include any relevant interaction analyses (e.g., gender × place of residence or cancer type × age). If such analyses are not possible due to sample size or study design, kindly state this explicitly in the manuscript.

Response: Was added in methods (Section 2.5. Data analysis).

We believe addressing these points will further strengthen the scientific rigor and transparency of your study.
Best regards

3 Revision 2

1 comment · 13 Jul 2025

Editor-in-Chief

ACCEPT 13 Jul 2025

accepted