Reviewer's report

Title: Anthropometric and clinical assessment of malnutrition in Malaysian patients with advanced cirrhosis

Version: 2 **Date:** 20 April 2010

Reviewer: Manuela Merli

Reviewer's report:

Reviewer's report

Although the authors have made a considerable effort which was of great help in improving the manuscript there are still some problems which need to be handle.

Major Compulsory Revisions

The interpretation of laboratory parameters is still unclear in the revised version. According to the results, when the authors analyze SGA B and SGA C cirrhotic patients, these groups show differences in anthropometry but not in the level of visceral proteins. On the other hand the mean values of visceral proteins were different in patients with different Child class (this is even not surprising as albumin values are included in the Child score). This means that albumin and/or transferrin levels are not influenced by nutritional status but more by the severity of liver failure . The conclusion is that the determination of the visceral proteins should not be considered an appropriate tool for the nutritional assessment in patients with compromised liver function.

The correlation between albumin and CRP is probably not needed.

Minor Essential Revisions

Pag 6. Why were patients with hepatic encephalopathy excluded? Do the authors mean all degree of hepatic encephalopathy or those with severe or persistent hepatic encephalopathy?

Pag 6. 2nd paragraph line 2 “of” is repeated two times

Pag 7. Line 10 “an established measure of muscle protein mass” should be moved to line 15 after (MAMC)

Pag 9. Last paragraph: I suggest to change as follows: “For the comparison of nutritional status in cirrhotic patients of various etiologies SGA was also utilized as this has been shown to reliably identify malnutrition-related muscle dysfunction (20). Statistical…”

Pag 10. Last sentence: the difference in anthropometric parameters according to SGA is expected as the evaluation of fat and muscle tissues is included in SGA score. Introduce the sentence with “As expected, in both male and female patients…..”

Pag 12. Line 8 “would have” should be “could have”

Pag 12. Line 17 “had” should be “was”

Pag 12. Line 19 should be “ The low levels of biochemical parameters ….was mainly indicative of hepatic dysfunction, in fact no difference was evidenced in cirrhotic patients with different nutritional impairment (SGA B and SGA C)”

Pag 14. Line 6. Why the authors suggest once again that albumin and transferrin are more sensitive at predicting malnutrition when the lower values in Child C vs B suggests the opposite??

Discretionary Revisions

Pag 14. Line 15 “ leading to more severe nutritional….”

Pag 14. Line 16 Suggestion: “alluded to” change to “reported”; “appear to concur” change to “ are in agreement”

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I have no competing interests' below