

Peer Review File

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Reviewer A

The study investigated differential expression of genes involved in calcineurin and mTOR signaling pathway and analyzed regulatory miRNAs in the peripheral blood of 36 kidney recipients under tacrolimus-based therapy.

Major:

Comment 1. The background and rationale behind the selection of PPP3CA, PPP3CB, MOTR, FKBP1A, FKBP1B and FKBP5 is not clear in the introduction.

Reply: We thank the reviewer for the attention and time in reviewing our manuscript. We have altered the Introduction Section to incorporate the reviewer's comment.

Changes in the text: Please, see page 3, lines 42-51.

Minor:

Line 292: human circulation " $\gamma\delta$ " T cells

Reply: We thank the reviewer for pointing this out and we have added new information.

Changes in the text: Please, see page 16, lines 306-310.

Line 300: miR103a should be miR-103a

Reply: We corrected the term accordingly.

Changes in the text: Please, see page 16, line 317.

Reviewer B

This paper presents results from a study conducted to explore the expression of genes involved in calcineurin and mTOR signaling pathway and regulatory miRNAs among 36 kidney transplant recipients under tacrolimus-based therapy from pre-transplantation to 3 months post-transplantation.

This study was generally well-conducted and the manuscript is fluently written.

The following are some comments that I am highlighting for the authors' attention to enhance their manuscript.

1) Methods (Pg. 5, Line 76): Please comment on any sample size calculation performed to derive the sample size of 36 for this study.

Reply: We thank the reviewer for the thoughtful and helpful review. We clarified this point in the Methods Section.

Changes in the text: Please, see page 5, lines 88-90.

2) Methods (Pg. 8, Line 156): Please edit "Fisher test" as "Fisher's exact test".

Reply: We corrected the term accordingly.

Changes in the text: Please, see page 9, line 168.

3) Results (Pg. 9, Lines 178-179; Pg. 11, Lines 203 and 214): Instead of stating “data not shown”, it will be helpful to readers if the authors could provide the results of the analyses between BCAR and non-BCAR groups as online supplementary material.

Reply: We thank for this valuable suggestion. We included the results in Supplementary Material.

Changes in the text: Please, see pages 10 (line 191) and 11 (line 215), and the Supplementary Material included.

4) Typographical errors:

Please amend “allograph” as “allograft” (Pg. 14, Line 265).

Please amend “cell-mediate” as “cell-mediated” (Pg. 15, Line 305).

Please amend “Day 7s” as “Day 7” (Table 2 column heading).

Reply: The terms were corrected accordingly.

Changes in the text: Please, see page 14 (line 280), 16 (line 322) and Table 2 revised.

5) Figure 2: Please clarify why data was presented for only 22 patients instead of 36.

Reply: The authors thank the reviewer for the excellent observation. We have rewritten the text clarifying this point.

Changes in the text: Please, see the information in the Figure 2 legend (page 26).

6) Table 1: Please include “and donors” in the table heading.

Reply: The information was included, as suggested. Thank you!

Changes in the text: Please, see Table 1 revised.

7) Table 1: Besides Caucasian, please include and specify the data for other racial/ethnic groups among the recipients and donors, respectively.

Reply: As well suggested by the reviewer, we have included the data.

Changes in the text: Please, see Table 1 revised.

8) Table 2: The footnote “Differences, in the lines, are shown as superscript letters (p<0.05).” is unclear. Please clarify what “in the lines” mean, and also how to interpret the “a” and “b” superscript letters in the table.

Reply: Thank you for the critical analysis. We have considered this suggestion and we modified the presentation of the significant post-hoc tests.

Changes in the text: Please, see footnote of Table 2 revised.