

# Review of: "Investigation of the effects of wet cupping therapy on some inflammatory factors in patients affected by non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD): A quasi-experimental trial study with self-controls"

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**Potential competing interests:** The author(s) declared that no potential competing interests exist.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to consider this manuscript. Non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD) can result in cirrhosis of the liver or liver cancer. This manuscript aims to explore the effects of wet cupping therapy, an ancient therapeutic method, on some inflammatory cytokines believed to impact the inflammatory state of the liver of patients affected by NAFLD. The authors enrolled a total of sixteen NAFLD grade II and III patients which diagnosed by abdominal ultrasound to participated in this quasi-experimental study with self-control. The changes of serum concentrations of inflammatory factors before and after cupping were analyzed. And the experimental results were analyzed and discussed in detail. The results demonstrated that wet cupping therapy may be seen as a treatment to reduce the inflammatory state in patients affected by NAFLD when given at proper intervals, which will provide a promising alternative for the treatment of NAFLD. The content of the manuscript is novel. The methods, results and data interpretation can support its conclusion. However, some parts of the manuscript need to be modified and added. Therefore, major revision is suggested to make this manuscript acceptable.

1. Abbreviations should be used with their full names first appeared in the manuscript. Besides, authors should use uniform abbreviations throughout the manuscript. For example, the "CRP" in the abstract.
2. In any trial, the size of the sample directly determines whether the test results are credible. In this manuscript, why do you only have 16 subjects in your trial? Can you explain?
3. In Figure 1, what is the full name of the abbreviation "TNF-T"?
4. Legend of Figure 1, an average increase of 17% and the other one with an average of 403%. Here, how do you get the data "403%"? Can you explain?
5. In the abstract, a total of sixteen NAFLD grade II and III patients, diagnosed by abdominal ultrasound, participated in this quasi-experimental study with self-control. However, Table 1 only has 15 patients, why?
6. Our study reveals that the first cupping reduced the NF- $\alpha$  by an average of 16% in 59% of patients. Here, the "NF- $\alpha$ " is wrong. Check it.
7. Inhibition of IL-6 or IL-6R may cause hepatocellular injury. Here, what is the "IL-6R"? Can you explain?
8. The authors used many detection kits to test all liver function indicators from serum of the 16 subjects. Here, why not use an automatic biochemical analyzer?

9. Did the authors have previous research foundation, and had they published relevant papers in the past?