EXCLI Journal 2025;24:562-563 – ISSN 1611-2156
Received: December 22, 2024, published: May 23, 2025

Letter from the editor:

COMMENT TO "THE BENEFICIAL EFFECT OF COMBINATION THERAPY WITH SULFASALAZINE AND VALSARTAN IN THE TREATMENT OF ULCERATIVE COLITIS [EXCLI JOURNAL 2021;20:236-247]"

Jan. G. Hengstler*, Agapios Sachinidis[1]

* Editor-in-Chief, EXCLI Journal, Leibniz Research Centre for Working Environment and Human Factors at TU Dortmund (IfADo), Ardeystr. 67, 44139 Dortmund, Germany; E-mail: hengstler@ifado.de

[1] Institute of Neurophysiology and Centre for Molecular Medicine Cologne (CMMC), Robert-Koch-Str. 39, 50931 Cologne, Germany

Editors' inquiry concerning:

Asgharzadeh F, Yaghoubi A, Nazari SE, Hashemzadeh A, Hasanian SM, Avan A, Javandoost A, Ferns GA, Soleimanpour S and Khazaei M. The beneficial effect of combination therapy with sulfasalazine and valsartan in the treatment of ulcerative colitis. EXCLI J. 2021;20: 236-247. https://doi.org/10.17179/excli2021-3370

We received a notice of possible scientific misconduct concerning the article of Asgharzadeh et al. (2021) published in our journal.

According to our guidelines, we investigate such accusations in a transparent and objective manner. Our investigations include the request and analysis of raw data. However, it is beyond our capabilities to carry out investigations in the laboratories of the authors or to test the reproducibility of the data experimentally ourselves.

In the present case, the approaches were as follows: In Figure 1B of the above mentioned publication (Asgharzadeh et al., 2021), the same or very similar data for controls (negative controls) and colitis (positive controls) were shown also in other publications. Therefore, two members of our editorial board investigated, if the controls of Figure 1B of Asgharzadeh et al. (2021) are adequate. Upon our request, the corresponding author sent us the set of raw data corresponding to Figure 1B. Our conclusion is that the listed negative and positive controls are adequate and agree to the data shown in Figure 1B. It may be criticized that the authors did not mention that the same negative and positive controls were also used for other comparisons published in different articles. However, this does not compromise the conclusions of the here investigated article. In future, the editors will consistently demand that this must be stated in the materials and methods section if data is used more than once, and we will include this rule in our guidelines.

The table with the raw data of each individual mouse, treatment group, body weight at the different time periods after treatment, and the date of treatment is available in Supplementary Table 1.

https://dx.doi.org/10.17179/excli2025-8388

EXCLI Journal 2025;24:562-563 – ISSN 1611-2156
Received: December 22, 2024, published: May 23, 2025

Supplementary Table 1: This table contains the raw data corresponding to Figure 1A and B in the original article: "Asgharzadeh F, Yaghoubi A, Nazari SE, Hashemzadeh A, Hasanian SM, Avan A, Javandoost A, Ferns GA, Soleimanpour S, Khazaei M. The beneficial effect of combination therapy with sulfasalazine and valsartan in the treatment of ulcerative colitis. EXCLI J. 2021;20:236-247. doi: 10.17179/excli2021-3370.

Mouse No.	Group	Treatment	BW (g) Day 1	BW (g) Day 2	BW (g) Day 3	BW (g) Day 4	BW (g) Day 5	BW (g) Day 6	BW (g) Day 7	BW (g) Day 8	BW (g) Day 9	BW (g) Day 10
1	Control	Water (Day 1 to Day 10)	22.241	22.468	22.846	22.945	23.211	23.385	23.556	23.715	24.4	24.582
2	Control	Water (Day 1 to Day 10)	22.675	22.81	23.162	22.964	23.025	22.81	23.015	24.441	25.06	25.314
3	Control	Water (Day 1 to Day 10)	22.514	22.71	22.724	22.997	23.661	23.857	24.049	24.331	22.958	23.224
4	Control	Water (Day 1 to Day 10)	22.942	22.912	23.365	23.195	23.29	23.573	24.086	23.757	24.31	24.517
5	Control	Water (Day 1 to Day 10)	22.348	22.537	22.863	22.959	23.041	23.476	23.676	22.415	22.393	22.548
6	Control	Water (Day 1 to Day 10)	22.276	22.419	22.52	22.741	22.937	23.147	23.331	23.449	23.927	24.082
1	DSS	DSS (Day 1 to Day 7); Water (Day 8 to Day 10)	22.102	21.722	21.383	20.999	20.897	20.116	19.837	19.907	20.123	20.683
2	DSS	DSS (Day 1 to Day 7); Water (Day 8 to Day 10)	22.514	22.235	21.616	21.392	21.316	20.493	20.364	20.349	20.34	21.109
3	DSS	DSS (Day 1 to Day 7); Water (Day 8 to Day 10)	22.82	22.373	22.141	21.656	21.292	20.586	20.411	20.571	20.959	21.009
4	DSS	DSS (Day 1 to Day 7); Water (Day 8 to Day 10)	22.231	21.953	21.57	21.12	20.678	20.086	20.042	20.024	20.402	21.048
5	DSS	DSS (Day 1 to Day 7); Water (Day 8 to Day 10)	22.118	21.773	21.246	21.101	20.798	19.924	19.733	20.028	20.317	20.366
6	DSS	DSS (Day 1 to Day 7); Water (Day 8 to Day 10)	22.452	22.054	21.569	21.106	20.901	20.33	20.206	20.385	20.211	20.899
1	SSZ	DSS (Day 1 to Day 7); SSZ (Day 3 to Day 7; Water (Day 8 to Day 10)	22.224	21.957	21.477	21.168	20.813	21.146	21.505	21.501	21.878	22.295
2	SSZ	DSS (Day 1 to Day 7); SSZ (Day 3 to Day 7; Water (Day 8 to Day 10)	22.846	22.309	22.101	21.753	21.422	21.836	22.072	22.103	22.481	22.899
3	SSZ	DSS (Day 1 to Day 7); SSZ (Day 3 to Day 7; Water (Day 8 to Day 10)	22.118	21.845	21.597	21.014	20.72	21.178	21.234	21.399	21.849	22.329
4	SSZ	DSS (Day 1 to Day 7); SSZ (Day 3 to Day 7; Water (Day 8 to Day 10)	22.336	21.893	21.645	21.337	20.902	21.222	21.243	21.445	22.085	22.414
5	SSZ	DSS (Day 1 to Day 7); SSZ (Day 3 to Day 7; Water (Day 8 to Day 10)	22.651	22.39	22.05	21.688	21.249	21.406	21.707	21.855	22.372	22.7
6	SSZ	DSS (Day 1 to Day 7); SSZ (Day 3 to Day 7; Water (Day 8 to Day 10)	22.943	22.662	22.174	21.816	21.75	21.69	21.98	22.265	22.653	23.017
1	Val	DSS (Day 1 to Day 7); Val (Day 3 to Day 7); Water (Day 8 to Day 10)	22.654	22.18	21.483	20.414	20.84	20.926	21.208	21.688	22.153	22.691
2	Val	DSS (Day 1 to Day 7); Val (Day 3 to Day 7); Water (Day 8 to Day 10)	22.395	21.953	21.07	21.591	20.819	21.067	21.137	21.701	22.167	22.541
3	Val	DSS (Day 1 to Day 7); Val (Day 3 to Day 7); Water (Day 8 to Day 10)	22.478	22.21	21.441	20.75	20.815	21.185	20.969	21.592	21.894	22.524
4	Val	DSS (Day 1 to Day 7); Val (Day 3 to Day 7); Water (Day 8 to Day 10)	22.512	22.1	21.391	21.352	20.926	21.161	21.344	21.884	21.867	22.567
5	Val	DSS (Day 1 to Day 7); Val (Day 3 to Day 7); Water (Day 8 to Day 10)	22.952	22.298	21.813	21.379	21.449	21.839	22.267	22.267	22.663	23.008
6	Val	DSS (Day 1 to Day 7); Val (Day 3 to Day 7); Water (Day 8 to Day 10)	22.874	22.367	21.742	21.453	21.25	21.933	22.198	22.211	22.587	22.935
1	Val+SSZ	DSS (Day 1 to Day 7); Val and SSZ (Day 3 to Day 7); Water (Day 8 to Day 10)	22.951	22.429	22.236	21.785	21.371	21.658	22.054	22.888	23.273	23.772
2	Val+SSZ	DSS (Day 1 to Day 7); Val and SSZ (Day 3 to Day 7); Water (Day 8 to Day 10)	22.145	22.039	21.383	21.058	20.886	21.818	21.722	22.122	22.587	22.967
3	Val+SSZ	DSS (Day 1 to Day 7); Val and SSZ (Day 3 to Day 7); Water (Day 8 to Day 10)	22.324	22.271	21.966	21.417	21.384	21.811	22.054	22.267	22.691	23.168
4	Val+SSZ	DSS (Day 1 to Day 7); Val and SSZ (Day 3 to Day 7); Water (Day 8 to Day 10)	22.452	22.113	21.421	21.256	20.937	21.729	21.857	22.395	23.058	23.292
5	Val+SSZ	DSS (Day 1 to Day 7); Val and SSZ (Day 3 to Day 7); Water (Day 8 to Day 10)	22.742	22.639	22.457	21.616	21.746	22.023	22.459	22.96	23.184	23.527
6	Val+SSZ	DSS (Day 1 to Day 7); Val and SSZ (Day 3 to Day 7); Water (Day 8 to Day 10)	22.651	22.248	22.17	21.519	21.676	21.837	22.421	22.867	23.083	23.439

Abbreviations: BW: Body Weight; DSS: Dextran Sodium Sulfate; SSZ: Sulfasalazine; Val: Valsartan