LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Response to the "Letter to the editor regarding article, 'High-mobility group box 1 as a biomarker in critically ill patients'."

Dear Editor,

We read with great interest the letter by Chen and colleagues.¹ High-mobility group box 1 (HMGB1) protein has gained attention as a potential biomarker in critical illness, which was the focus of our recently published study,² as well as a promising therapeutic target in systemic inflammation and sepsis. Regarding the latter aspect, a great wealth of experimental data investigated different approaches of targeting HMGB1 in models of sepsis.³ As Chen et al rightly pointed out, we summarized these experimental findings with the sentence: "In experimental models of sepsis, HMGB1 has been described as a late mediator of sepsis, and its blockade in murine sepsis models improved mortality." In their letter, Chen and coworkers stress that antagonizing HMGB1 in experimental sepsis models reduced mortality and improved survival. In fact, this is what we wanted to express by the term "improved mortality." We would like to emphasize that "improved mortality" should not be interpreted as "increased mortality," but as "increased survival" or "reduced mortality." We thank Chen and coworkers for clarifying this important aspect of HMGB1 biology in the context of sepsis.

ORCID

Frank Tacke <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6206-0226>

Alexander Koch

Frank Tacke

Department of Medicine III, RWTH-University Hospital Aachen,
Aachen, Germany

Correspondence

Frank Tacke, Department of Medicine III, RWTH-University Hospital
Aachen, Aachen, Germany.
Email: frank.tacke@gmx.net

REFERENCES

1. Chen ZQ, Chen F, Li L. Letter to the Editor Regarding Article, "High mobility group box 1 as a biomarker in critically ill patients". *J Clin Lab Anal.* 2018;e22821.
2. Yagmur E, Buendgens L, Herbers U, et al. High mobility group box 1 as a biomarker in critically ill patients. *J Clin Lab Anal.* 2018;32:e22584.
3. Andersson U, Yang H, Harris H. Extracellular HMGB1 as a therapeutic target in inflammatory diseases. *Expert Opin Ther Targets.* 2018;22:263-277.