

**Supplementary Table 1.** Clinical characteristics of patients

Variables	<i>H. pylori</i> -infected	Uninfected
Age (median, range)	(43 year, 22–71 years)	(46 year, 25–68 years)
Sex (male/female)	42/36	32/27

Exclusion criteria were: previous treatment for *H. pylori* infection, use of inhibitors of acid secretion and/or antibiotics during the 2 months before the study, use of anticoagulant drugs in the last week, gastrointestinal malignancy, severe concomitant cardiovascular, respiratory or endocrine diseases, clinically significant renal or hepatic disease, haematological disorders, previous gastro-oesophageal surgery, history of allergy to any of the drug used in the study, pregnancy or lactation, alcohol abuse, drug addiction, severe neurological or psychiatric disorders, and long-term use of corticosteroids or anti-inflammatory drugs.