Reviewer's report

Title: A systematic review of intravenous gamma globulin for therapy of acute myocarditis

Version: 2 Date: 6 November 2004

Reviewer: Bernhard Maisch

Reviewer's report:

General
The authors have responded to some major requests. However, they still rely only on the only negative randomized trial (IMAC), which has not taken into account the aetiologies by analyzing biopsies from the patients by PCR. Also they have not taken into account publications on the specific viral etiologies: such as CMV, where an old and a new report on controlled trials are available:


and another case report on specific etiologies, which would make it worth mentioning e.g. in varicelly myocarditis


My opinion on the subject is less negativistic than that of the authors:

Conflicting data exist with respect to the improvement of surrogate markers such as the ejection fraction under high-dose immunoglobulins. More evidence can be weighted in favour of a positive treatment effect despite of the negative IMAC trial, in which viral etiology was not evaluated in detail. Importantly there were no detrimental effects of the ivIG reported in all trials.

One has to consider the high costs of this treatment, however. A trial taking into account the different etiologies (different viruses assessed separately vs. non-viral/autoreactive vs. placebo) is lacking, however.

The authors might also look at a review on treatment in myocarditis by the undersigned, in which ivIg treatment is also discussed:
Bernhard Maisch, Günther Hufnagel, Susanne Kölsch, Rainer Funck, Annette Richter, Heinz Rupp, Sabine Pankuweit: Treatment of Inflammatory Dilated Cardiomyopathy and Myocarditis with mmunosuppression and i.v. Immunoglobulins Herz 2004; 29: issue 6 (october)pp: not yet available

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can
be reached: include controlled study and case report on ivIG treatment in specific etiologies, see above.

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

**What next?:** Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No

**Declaration of competing interests:**

no competing interests.