Reviewer's report

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

Version: 2 Date: 26 October 2004

Reviewer: Daniel Levi

Reviewer's report:

General

Although this study essentially documents a negative finding after a complete literature review, it makes the point very clearly that more RCT studies are needed to evaluate the use of ivIG for myocarditis. Because many/most institutions continue to use ivIG for presumed myocarditis this article serves as a good reminder that there is no basis in the literature for this treatment. It is unfortunate that data from a number of RCT could not be pooled for a sub-group analysis as this would have made for a significant and very important analysis.

As it stands presently, this study has concluded that there is not enough data in the literature to appropriately evaluate ivIG as a treatment option for myocarditis. Myocarditis is a very heterogeneous disease with many causes. It is likely that ivIG may be effective only against a few of this causes and only if given at the appropriate time. Although this is NOT a solid "negative study", it is nonetheless an important and appropriate conclusion. Any RCT desgined to address this issue will need to be sufficiently large. To date the Drucker study is the best we have.

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

My FIGURE 1 was blank and my Table 1 was cut off.

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

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Accept after discretionary revisions

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests: