Reviewer's report

Title: Crotaline Fab antivenom is effective in cases of severe North American pit viper envenomation: a integrative review

Version: 2 Date: 3 April 2009

Reviewer: Robert L Norris

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All Minor Essential Revisions:

1. Is the question posed by the authors well defined? YES
2. Are the methods appropriate and well described? YES – one area that is a bit unclear is how you defined “initial control of coagulopathy” (p8) – was it “return to normal or near-normal” or was it “any definite improvement in coagulopathy or platelet count”? was it different depending on the presence/absence of clinical bleeding? Clarify
3. Are the data sound? YES
4. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition? YES
5. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data? YES
   - You should point out (p12), where you state: “…maintenance FabAV therapy, which has been shown in a randomized controlled trial to prevent recurrence”, that this is true of early recurrence, but not delayed recurrence of coagulopathy.
   - p 14: as you know, not all venomous snakebites are reported to the NPDS – and this is clearly why Kitchens’ and Eskin’s case was not in the database. (Also pertinent to your statement on p 4 that “at least 2,700 people seek hospital treatment” each year – 2,700 is clearly a significant underestimation of the number of bites that actually occur)
   - Table 3: without going back and reviewing the 2 articles cited, it is unclear to me how one assesses that FabAV “controlled” “the need for intubation”. Did intubation not have to occur? vs. Was the patient extubated shortly after FabAV?
6. Are limitations of the work clearly stated? YES
7. Do the authors clearly acknowledge any work upon which they are building, both published and unpublished? YES WITH THE EXCEPTION OF:
   - cite reference(s) for:
     - p4: “Crotalidae Polyvalent Immune Fab (Ovine)
       (CroFabTM, Protherics, Nashville, TN; hereafter, FabAV) is thought to convey a reduced risk of acute and delayed-type hypersensitivity reactions.”
     - p4: quoted text: “for the management of patients with minimal or moderate
North American crotalid envenomation.”

8. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found? YES

9. Is the writing acceptable? YES
   - a few minor corrections:
     - title: should be “an integrative”
     - abstract/background: should be “… FabAV is currently…”
     - throughout text: change “series’” to “series” (delete apostrophe)
     - p7: wrong reference format for “(Yip 02)” (possibly just by patient #)
     - p13: should be “… median dose … was administered.”
     - Table 3: define “coag” – might consider identifying in some fashion other than “1st coag patient” and “2nd coag patient” (possibly just by patient #)

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests