Reviewer's report

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

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Reviewer: Ida S Sano-Martins

Reviewer's report:

Minor essential revisions:
The manuscript reviews publications containing data about the treatment of severe human snakebite cases using FabAV (1996-July 2008). This antivenom is not approved by US FDA to use in severely envenomed patients, since it was tested and approved only for use in mild and moderate cases. The number of severe cases evaluated is scarce (n= 25), however, this report give us important data showing, in general, that FabAV treatment of severe crotalid envenomation is effective even though some patients with recurrent or delayed-onset venom effects. The authors should emphasize that recurrence of clinical and laboratory manifestations may occur after treatment with FabAV, even in moderate pit viper envenomation. Additionally, it is reported a fatal case of envenomation that after "successful" treatment manifested brain hemorrhage and cerebral edema (Craig and Eskin, 2008). Thus, " patient with significant coagulopathy should undergo close monitoring during the first 2 weeks following the bite" as wrote Boyer et al,(1999). This is an important point to consider while recurrence such as defibrinogenation and thrombocytopenia syndrome is not well understood after antivenom therapy. As the number of publications of treated severe cases is limiting, the efficacy of this antivenom cannot be definitively proved, and the authors should suggest a study without placebo controlled trial of FabAV in severe snakebite cases, but with a detailed clinical and laboratory (blood coagulation, hematology, biochemistry) study, including venom antigenemia, following the patients up to complete recovery.

Discretionary revisions
It will be useful to explain in Introduction what is the Crotalidae Polyvalent Immune Fab (Ovine) FabAV, and the whole-IgG pit viper antivenom, as well the advantages and disadvantages of each one , such as side effects, frequency of recurrence, etc

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’