Author's response to reviews

Title: Anticoagulant therapy for nodular regenerative hyperplasia in a HIV-infected patient

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear editors,

Please find enclosed the manuscript entitled "Anticoagulant therapy for nodular regenerative hyperplasia in a HIV-infected patient" by F. Bihl et al., which we would like to submit for publication to the BMC Gastroenterology.

Nodular regenerative hyperplasia (NRH) is a relatively new entity of liver disease in HIV-infected patients causing non-cirrhotic portal hypertension with serious consequences. A hypercoagulable state with coagulation disorders in association with antiviral therapy seems to play a major role in the pathogenesis. The optimal treatment for this syndrome is not yet clear and is generally symptomatic (variceal ligation, etc). A recent report suggested liver transplantation as a new indication for NRH in HIV-infected patients.

In this report we describe a HIV-infected patient who developed non-cirrhotic portal hypertension due to NRH with repeated upper gastrointestinal bleedings, refractory ascites and vanishing general conditions (BMI <15). A coagulation disorder with a hypercoagulable state was detected and anticoagulant treatment was initiated. The anticoagulant treatment with anti-vitamin K agents was inefficient probably due to a constant activation of the coagulation system. The patient was than listed for liver transplantation and a TIPS was placed to bridge to transplantation; however, only when the anticoagulant treatment was switched to low molecular weight heparin the thrombotic process was controlled and clinical conditions ameliorated notably. Liver transplantation was not any more necessary.

After a careful search in the literature we could not find any report concerning anticoagulant treatment and NRH in HIV-infected patients. We feel that the observations described in this case report contribute notably to the knowledge of NRH in HIV-infected patients and hence this information would be of considerable interest to the readership of the BMC Gastroenterology.

Possible reviewers with experience in this field were Dr. Marco Senzolo from the University of Padova, Dr. Aurelie Plessier from the Hospital Beaujon in Paris or Dr. Harry LA Janssen from Erasmus University in Rotterdam.

All authors concur with the publication of the data. The data have not been previously reported and are not under consideration for publication elsewhere.

Your consideration is much appreciated
Sincerely,

Florian Bihl MD