Reviewer's report

Title: The diagnostic value of endoscopy and Helicobacter pylori tests for peptic ulcer patients in late post-treatment setting

Version: 1 Date: 17 August 2004

Reviewer: Francis Megraud

Reviewer's report:

General
In this manuscript the authors highlight the interest in performing endoscopy and Helicobacter pylori tests in dyspeptic patients 5 years after H. pylori eradication attempts. It is interesting to note that among the 17 H. pylori negative patients four had erosions while there were two with erosions and 4 with ulcers among the 17 H. pylori positive patients indicating that it is worthwhile to perform endoscopy at this stage.

- It would be interesting to know what the cause of the symptoms and endoscopic findings in the H. pylori negative group were.
- It would also be nice to know more about the patients non-explored. Apparently 53 patients missed the 5 year follow-up. The reasons should be provided and among the remaining 81, only 34 were studied. Does this mean that none of the others had symptoms?
- Page 4, with regard to the 13C-UBT (no italics), please indicate if a test meal was used and the time of specimen collection.
- Page 5, last line, the cut-off for clarithromycin resistance according to NCCLS is ≥1 mg/l.
- A table showing the endoscopic findings according to the H. pylori status could be added.
- The presence of atrophy and intestinal metaplasia in a small number of H. pylori negative cases should be interpreted as sequelae of this infection.

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

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)
- Page 4, 5 lines before the end; “13C-urea”
- Page 7, line 10: “A poor concordance was found between…”
- Page 7, 4 lines before the end: “histological tests, was H. pylori negative”
- Page 8, line 5: “.intestinal metaplasia were rarely observed…” delete “with small frequency” line 6.
- Page 8, lines 7 & 8: “Lymphoid follicles were more frequent…”

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field
Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests: None