Reviewer's report

Title: Stampidine Prevents Mortality In An Experimental Mouse Model Of Viral Hemorrhagic Fever Caused By Lassa Virus

Version: 2 Date: 15 September 2003

Reviewer: Hans J Schnittler

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Comments to Ms:
„Stampidine Prevents Mortality In An Experimental Mouse Model Of Viral Hemorrhagic Fever Caused By Lassa Virus“ by Uckun et al

The paper describes application of stampidine in Lassa VHF as an antiviral drug able to block lethality in Lassa virus infections in a mouse model. Mice were challenged by intra cerebral injection of virus (10-100 LD 50). Treatment was performed by i.p injection of stampidine with 25 and 50 mg/kg BW. Control mice received placebo. Up to 90 % survival of infected animals were seen after a dose of 50 mg/kg BW. The paper is clearly written.

Concerns:
Have the toxicity of stampidine be tested in monkeys so far. This should be mentioned in the discussion.
In formations about the bioavailability in the brain and the plasma protein binding of stampidine should be included in the discussion as well.
Page 3: Be aware of imported cases in United Kingdom, Japan, Canada and Israel.

Finally, Lassa Virus is classified as a Biosafety Level-4 agent. Experiments were performed in BS Level-3 in Russian.

Advice on publication: Accept after minor compulsory revisions

Level of interest: A paper of considerable merit and interest in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Declaration of competing interests:
NONE