Reviewer's report

Title: Stability of three Candida albicans microsatellite markers in two French ICU populations supports a lack of nosocomial cross-contamination

Version: 1 Date: 30 May 2006

Reviewer: anna maria AM tortorano

Reviewer's report:

General

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
1. The study was not conducted in two ICUs as reported in the Background and as it appears in some section of the paper. The multilocus genotypic results concerning hospital A are compared with those already reported in the literature (CID 2002; 35:1477-83). Therefore a complete revision of the text is needed.
2. The adherence to the standard for reporting is often lacking (methods and comments are reported in the section “Results”).

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)
Background
The aim of the study is generally reported at the end of the section “Introduction” after the analysis of the different issues.
Details concerning the hospitals have to be reported in the section “Material and methods”.

Results.
Some sentences/words have not to be included in the section “Results”. For example page 7 line 12 “interestingly”, page 8 line 13-14 “previously known”. Table 2 has to be removed as the paper refers only to Candida albicans.
Details concerning PCR (pag. 7, last paragraph and pag. 8, first 6 lines) have to be reported in the section “Material and methods”.
Page 8, last paragraph: different genotypes from patients in hospital A are 29. As reported in lines 11-15: 26 had a specific genotype, 8 shared the ML genotype and two shared another identical genotype. Therefore 26+1+1+1. Is it correct?
In addition I suggest to add a table reporting the different genotype patterns associated with an identification code and another table reporting the number of patients with a specific genotype in the two hospitals.

Discussion
Page 9, line 12 “some patients”: please specify.
Page 10. Comments from line 3 to line 22 have to be deleted as the study is not designed for this purpose. It is impossible to compare the yield of the two media in different patient population and with different biological samples. In addition the other explanation (line 14-16) concerning the role of amphotericin B has to be rejected as the difference of Candida acquisition after 72 h does not seem statistically significant (80.3% vs 83.7%, see table 1)

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)
What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests