Reviewer’s report

Title: Obesity and smoking are factors associated with poor prognosis in patients with bacteraemia

Version: 1 Date: 15 November 2006

Reviewer: Athanassios Tsakris

Reviewer’s report:

General
The study is an interesting one that presents novel findings regarding the role of obesity, smoking and alcohol abuse in the fatal outcome of bacteraemic patients. There are some points that could improve presentation of the manuscript.

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

Abstract
The authors should mention the fatality rate of this particular bacteraemic population.

Materials and Methods
It should be emphasized that the patients were randomly included in the study.
It is not clear if all community-acquired bacteraemias were included in the study. What criteria the authors used to define a bacteraemia as community- or hospital-acquired?
The authors should clarify that in the case fatality rate were not included cases of death in bacteraemic patients when other factors caused the death.

Results
It should be mentioned that patients with two episodes of bacteraemia were not found (or were not included) in the study.
The authors should present their percentages with one decimal (i.e. Nineteen patients (12.8%) died of bacteraemia).
A limitation of the study is that in almost half of the deceased patients (9 of 19) data regarding obesity were not available. This should be clearly mentioned (most likely in the discussion section).

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
3rd paragraph: a recent study (Ref. 32) that examines smoking habit as risk factor for fatal outcome of bacteraemic patients should be added.

Discussion
The first sentence of the 2nd paragrapgh should be presented more clearly.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)
I would suggest the authors to use: ‘bacteraemic patients’ instead of bacteraemia patients’ throughout the manuscript.

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:
I declare that I have no competing interests