Reviewer’s report

Title: Cytomegalovirus Infections among African-Americans

Version: 2 Date: 30 June 2008

Reviewer: Chris Robertson

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The use of a logistic mixed model with the simple (exchangeable) correlation is correct for the children as there are a number of families with more than one child. This is equivalent to the repeated measures mentioned in the text though the use of the word repeated is a little strange in this situation as there appears to only be 1 measurement per person.

The statistical analysis is appropriate for the data. It is correct to analyse adults and children separately, though they could have been combined as most of the variables in Table 1 are family level variables. Only breast feeding is specific to children. The age relationship is more complex than linear (Figure 1) and a quadratic trend is an adequate way of dealing with this.

Minor revisions

1. For the 113 adults from the 121 families I did not see any mention of how many families had 0, 1, 2, 2+ adults. There may be a number of families without any adults

2. From the methods section there is the sentence

   The final model included the following terms: a
   linear and quadratic trend for children, a linear trend for adults, a different intercept for
   children and adults. Likelihood-ratio chi-square tests were used to test for significance.

   The above cannot be correct and probably means linear and quadratic terms for age of children and age of adults

3. In the abstract the authors mention that the subjects are lower SES. At the end of the results they state that the subjects are comparable to the US population in Table 4. To me these appear to be conflicting. I think that there is evidence in Table 4 that the study households have lower education levels than the US population but isn’t the education levels of African American households lower than the US population, in any case. It may be that the households in the survey are representative of all African American households in the US.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely
related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests