Reviewer's report

Title: Trauma-associated growth of dormant micrometastasis

Version: 2 Date: 4 March 2005

Reviewer: David Bouchier-Hayes

Reviewer's report:

We read with interest the report by El Saghir et al, of the case of accelerated tumor growth at a site of trauma. We think that the article should stimulate debate regarding the emerging relationship between injury, inflammation and cancer. A number of points arise. Firstly, this is not a rare, but rather an underreported phenomenon, due largely to the fact that such recurrences often go unnoticed for considerable intervals. The location of the recurrence described, i.e. within the parietal bone, lent itself to early detection thereby facilitating an observation of its subsequent growth pattern.

This case history illustrates the phenomenon of accelerated tumor growth following relatively minor trauma. Importantly however, it emphasises a role for local, rather than systemic, mediators, in this phenomenon. Finally, the stimulation of micrometastases is much debated. This report underscores the need to differentiate between local and systemic factors (such as outlined recently by Coffey et al, Journal of Biological Chemistry (March 1st, 2005)) and their differential effects on accelerated tumor growth following trauma.

Yours truly,

J.C.Coffey, H.P.Redmond, D.Bouchier-Hayes

We also make a number of editorial suggestions;

Abstract
Line 1: Omit the first "and"
L6: “describe” in place of "report"
L8: omit "rare"

Background:
L7: omit "rare"
L4: "surgical interventions may trigger tumor growth, an effect associated with."

Case pres:
L1: "diagnosed with" not "diagnosed to have"
L3: "." After "window"
L7: "," After "response"
New sentence, "In April."
L11: "rubbery" instead of "elastic hard"
L13: "parietal bone" and not "lobe"
22: "had" in place of "has"
Last line "Whilst the lesion was radiation sensitive the patient suffered a massive haemoptysis and expired"

Discussion:
Paragraph one:
L2: "the traumatic event was followed by the development of ."
L3: "as demonstrated in"
L4: "the accompanying"
L5: "This event may be explained by the presence of ..... that were stimulated by ."
L13: "for" tumors to develop
The last sentence in the first paragraph should be two sentences.

Paragraph two:
"may" instead of "might"
"through several mechanisms that include...

Paragraph 3:
"Dormant cancer cells, at the site of tissue trauma and thereby exposed to proinflammatory mediators, may be sufficiently stimulated to overcome dormancy"
Omit last sentence

P4: Last sentence omit
P5: first sentence omit

Ps: we would be happy to engage in debate on this very stimulating issue

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

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