Author's response to reviews

**Title:** Bilateral optic disc swelling and associated optic neuropathy in the setting of FOLFOX chemotherapy

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**Author's response to reviews:** see over
Dear Editor,

In response to the Reviewers comments:

Reviewer 1 –

We feel that we have provided a structured argument highlighting a possible association between 5-FU and optic neuropathy. We do not feel that we have stated this in an unreasonably strong manner, with words utilised within the article including:

1. May be (i.e. “resultant bilateral optic disc oedema with associated left optic neuropathy may be the result of arterial vasospasm induced by 5-FU in the short posterior ciliary arteries”);
2. Potential (i.e. “It highlights that 5-FU may have the potential to cause arterial vasospasm outside the cardiac vasculature, resulting in end-organ optic nerve ischaemia”);
3. Should be considered (i.e. It is not possible to prove from a single case that 5-FU causes short posterior ciliary artery vasospasm and ultimately NAION. However, given the biological plausibility of the mechanism and the close temporal association, we are of the opinion this should at least be considered”).

Furthermore, as highlighted within the article, if our patient did have a disc at risk, did possess the usual vascular risk factors that are generally associated with NAION or did suffer from obstructive sleep apnoea than the cause for the patient’s apparent NAION could merely be attributed to these usual risk factors. We feel that given the absence of these usual predisposing risk factors to NAION that the true effects of 5-FU can be discerned independent to the typical risk factors. We feel that we have stated that this is a “possible” association in keeping with the WHO criteria for a potential association.

Reviewer 2 –

Did not state any new concerns with the revised document.

I look forward to hearing your response.

Kind Regards,
Liam Turner