Reviewer's report

Title: Lymph node removal enhances corneal graft survival in mice at high risk of rejection

Version: 3  Date: 27 January 2004

Reviewer: Andrew JT George

Reviewer's report:

The authors have responded to my original points. I agree with most of their comments. I do wonder why they think that testing for tolerance using a subsequent skin graft (or a heterotopic corneal graft) is not possible. The skin graft is a 'tough' challenge as the skin is very immunogenic, and furthermore might contain skin specific minor antigens. However, you might expect to see some prolongation of survival. They suggest that heterotopic corneal transplants (as performed by Medawar) would not be acceptable because of the lack of immune privilege. But in such an experiment one would not care about immune priviledge as one is testing for the induction of tolerance?

I am still not convinced that in Fig 4 and table 1 that there is evidence that lymph node removal prolongs graft survival in animals with a prior graft. As the authors state the statistics do not reach significance. In general they state that there is a 7 day prolongation of survival, this is the difference in median graft survival. However if you look at figure 4 then this difference difference boils down to a single animal. In the group receiving a prior graft and no lymph node removal 3 animals rejected before the median survival of the group with lymph node removal, and 2 rejected after this. Thus an increase in survival of just one animal would result in a loss of this effect.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)
the spacing between words is sometimes lost. This may be a computer conversion problem, but if not needs to be corrected.
page 15 Figure spelt Figre

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
the authors need to consider if there is any difference (statistical or not) between the two groups sensitised by a prior corneal transplant.

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:

None