Reviewer's report

Title: Lactobacillus casei strain GG in the treatment of infants with acute watery diarrhea: A randomized, double-blind, placebo controlled clinical trial

Version: 1 Date: 19 May 2004

Reviewer: Stefano S Guandalini

Reviewer's report:

very well designed and conducted investigation, filling a gap in our informaiton on the role of probiotics in the treatment of acute diarrhea in children.

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

None

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

1. Why was the term of only 5 days selected as the cut-off for definition of prolonged diarrhea? Would the results have looked different had another more "traditional" cut-off been chosen?
2. Please state what was the cut-off used to define "a positive reaction for reducing substances" in the stools.
3. Although the P for the difference in prevalence of rotavirus between the 2 groups does not reach significance (a value of 0.100 in my own calculation), it is fair to say that patients in the L-GG group were less often affected by rotaviral diarrhea than their placebo counterparts. This bears a significance on the results of the study that should be more emphasized in the discussion, as it is well known now that L-GG appears most active in rotavirus cases than in bacterial diarrhea (which comprised a remarkable 41.7%0 of the L-GG group, and ETEC wasn't even included).
4. There must be a typo in the statement (Discussion) that "The amount of lactose offered to patients in this study was... 70 gr/kg/day"! That would equal to approximately 1 liter of formula per kg per day!!

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

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