Reviewer's report

Title: Knowledge and Behaviour of Parents concerning Sunning their Babies

Version: 1 Date: 26 May 2006

Reviewer: Jean-François Doré

Reviewer's report:

General

In this work, the authors have conducted a descriptive survey to assess knowledge of parents of babies on health effects of sun exposure and to describe sun exposure of babies by these parents. To this endeavour, 118 parents attending primary health care units in Turkey for vaccination of their babies were enrolled in the study during a month. It should be noted that the results of the survey could have been influenced by the fact that enrollment was done in winter.

This in itself is an interesting study since there are still quite few reports of parental behaviour regarding sun exposure of infants and children.

However the analysis of the data presented is rather limited and several revisions are necessary to improve the quality of informations brought by this survey.

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

1. The questionnaire used for the study is briefly described. Since this questionnaire was rather short (14 items only), it could be more informative to publish it as an annex to the article.

2. The question on benefits of sunlight on neonatal jaundice is somewhat intriguing. Neonatal jaundice occurs essentially in the first days or weeks of life, at a time when high bilirubin levels may seriously damage the baby's brain, and is normally treated by phototherapy. Neonatal jaundice is not likely to occur in a population of babies the age of which ranged from 1 to 23 months, and the answer of the 15 parents that sunlight was good for jaundice could have been influenced by an actual jaundice experienced by their babies. Could the authors comment on this point?

3. An important result is that most participants declare to expose their babies to sun outdoors. It would be of interest to known whether parameters of exposure (time, duration, sunscreen) were influenced by the baby's age.

4. It is suggested by the authors that in some areas, primary health care providers may be focusing on prevention of rickets. However, rickets is currently no longer a problem in developed countries. The authors should include a few words about prevalence of rickets in the populations from which their sample was drawn.

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

5. Few typing errors. e.g. page 5/16, last line 26 out od 118 is 22% and not 0.22%. Percentage of users of sunscreen of SPF 15+ (page 6, 3 rd paragraph), is not correct: 14/118 = 11.8% and not 15.8%.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)
6. The general conclusion from this study is that while most parents are aware of sun exposure benefits, they lack knowledge about sun protection and may have a risky behaviour. An other conclusion could be the poor level of information of the primary health care providers that have a very important role in the prevention of excessive sun exposure of infants and children.

**What next?:** Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

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

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests