Reviewer’s report

Title: Giant hydronephrosis mimicking progressive malignancy

Version: 1 Date: 12 September 2003

Reviewer: Michael K Bohlmann

Reviewer’s report:

General
The authors should commended for presenting this important case report outlining the preoperative difficulties in a patient with severe hydronephrosis. It is sufficiently rare to warrant publication. However, there are minor corrections that should be addressed:

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)
As the patient is described to be cachetic, a description of her body mass index might be useful.

Minor Compulsory Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)
The indication for hysterectomy should be given, including the information if unilateral ovarectomie had also been performed.
The differential diagnosis of a malignant kidney neoplasm should be better outlined. Other possible reasons for this abdominal tumour should be addressed (angiomyolipoma, etc)
Where there any radiological or biochemical signs of malignancy ? (signs of metastases, enlarged lymphnodes, signs of peritoneal carcinosis, paraneoplastic hemoglobine levels, tumour markers, hematuria etc).
The radiological dilemma to diagnose hydronephrosis because of the lack of functioning renal parenchyma should be more pointed out. What other preoperative diagnostic instruments might have facilitated the diagnosis of hydronephrosis in this particular case. Why was no cystoscopy performed in spite of compression and possible bladder infiltration by the pelvic tumour?
The localisation of pelvic tumour described as "originating from the genital organs" should be more precise. Which ovary was involved ? Was a compression or infiltration of the ureter visible during surgery ?
Where there any other pathological findings detectable during surgery (ascites, etc)The term "modern imaging technologies" is quite unspecific and should be explained.
Figures: The use of arrows is strongly encouraged.
Some corrections concerning the proper spelling of specific terms (exstirpation, page 2; "independent", page 4; "ovary", pages 2 and 5, "confirmed the" page 4, line 12) should be made.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
none

Advice on publication: Accept after minor compulsory revisions

Level of interest: A paper of considerable merit and interest in its field

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

None