Author’s response to reviews

Title: Relapsed angioimmunoblastic T-cell lymphoma with acquired expression of CD20: A case report and review of the literature

Authors:

Yara Banz (yara.banz@pathology.unibe.ch)
Fatime Krasniqi (FKrasniqi@uhbs.ch)
Stephan Dirnhofer (sdirnhofer@uhbs.ch)
Alexander Tzankov (ATzankov@uhbs.ch)

Version: 5 Date: 23 May 2013

Author’s response to reviews:

The authors have regarded reviewer three’s comments and have addressed the points raised (all changes in the revised manuscript are highlighted in red color).

1. Reply to reviewer comments Aleodor Andea:

Major Compulsory Revisions

This case report aims to demonstrate that a significant number of the neoplastic T-cells express CD20. In this context it would be informative to present a dual labeling staining for CD3 and CD20 to better demonstrate the co-expression of these markers in the same cells. Also I recommend that the pictures illustrating the stains for CD3, CD20 and CD79a show the same field. This would again help demonstrate the co-expression of CD3 and CD20 markers.

The authors have chosen not to re-stain the sections as a double staining for CD20-CD3 is not established in the laboratory; this is not trivial because both antigens are located on the same subcellular compartment (i.e. the cell membrane) which renders double-staining not feasable. However, changes have been made to figure 3 (see revised form) with photos taken from a different area of the biopsies to more clearly show the staining pattern. This was already done in response to the comments of reviewer 1 (please see initial revisions - see changes in the text, page 7, and figure legend, pages 18 and 19).

Following are some minor suggestions:

1. On page 3 please edit the last sentence “In the following...” for clarity.
   Changes have been made accordingly.

2. On page 4, 2nd line replace “anasarka” with “anasarca”
   Changes have been made accordingly.
3. The patient treatment and clinical course described on page 9 should be presented in the “Case Presentation” section instead of the “Conclusion.”

The authors feel that the treatment and clinical course are discussed in a wider clinical context not only relevant to this particular case and have therefore chosen not to modify the conclusions.