Reviewer's report

Title: Histopathological Evaluation OF Ocular Microsporidiosis by different stains

Version: 2 Date: 3 May 2006

Reviewer: Carlos A Muro-Cacho

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General
TITLE. Histopathological evaluation of ocular microsporidiosis by different stains.

DATE. April 26, 2006

REVIEWER. Carlos A. Muro-Cacho

LEVEL OF INTEREST. High

QUALITY OF WRITTEN ENGLISH. Acceptable

STATISTICAL REVIEW. None

COMPETING INTEREST. None

REVIEWER’s COMMENTS

I agree with Dr. Orenstein’s comments. Since the original slides are available, a higher magnification should be used. I have only seen, however, the “improved” images of the second version (if I have understood correctly the reviewing process in this manuscript).

Pathologists use low magnification as a screening tool but, in this particular circumstance, most will immediately move to a very high magnification for diagnosis. In fact, several magnifications -up to x1000- are used in the manuscript (the authors should, perhaps, consider to send the slides to a specialized photo-microscopy laboratory). Fine detail would add significant value to the authors’ claims and would increase acceptance by the pathologists/community.

I recognize, however, that the stains selected help to highlight the microorganisms on the tissue, calling the pathologist’s attention to their presence. In that sense, the findings described in the manuscript are very useful. The manuscript is a good review of an important topic.

Figure 1. Due to the low magnification, it is impossible to ascertain if the area described as inflammatory infiltrate with microabscess formation as described is truly that. The low magnification serves well to locate the lesion anatomically but, perhaps, an insert at a higher magnification would add detail and solve this problem.

Figure 2. Fine details are also missing in this figure, in particular regarding the description of the polar filament that appears as a featureless spot.

Figure 3. The fluorescence stains are of poor quality and non-contributory.

Figure 4. Since this work intends to establish the usefulness of certain stains in the detection of microsporidia, images are the essential component of the manuscript and, in particular, images of the two “best” stains. Figure 4 fails to convey this impression, again due to low magnification.

WHAT NEXT?. Since the authors are apparently unable to obtain better images, given the importance of this topic in relationship to HIV disease, I consider the manuscript acceptable for publication.

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)