Reviewer's report

Title: TMJ metastasis: a unusual case report

Version: 1 Date: 29 October 2007

Reviewer: Wenko Smolka

Reviewer's report:

General
This is an interesting case report. However, major revision is necessary.

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

The text is not written very well. Major revision is necessary. There are many sentences where I am not sure if this is correct english. Additionally, some sentences do not make any sense to me. A language check is absolutely necessary. I suggest to do it with a mother tongue expert. For example: I do not know the word "opted" (case report, first paragraph). Or for example: "... to postpone diagnosis and treatment decisions involving the lung until immediately after surgery." What do you mean? I also do not understand the sense of the last sentence of the article (the conclusion).

Do not use "he", "his" etc ; say "the patient" etc. Avoid inelegant alternatives such as "he/she". Patients should not be automatically designated as "she", and doctors as "he"or "we".


Introduction, first sentence: Reference number 7 is not correct regarding the context. Tandogan et al. are reporting a metastasis of the knee, not of the TMJ.

Discussion: You state that the first clinical symptoms of the presented case are extremely atypical. This is not true. Deviation of the mandible and crossbite are the common symptoms of TMJ metastases.

You describe the presented lesion as a bone metastasis. I have the impression from the intraoperative view that it might be a synovial metastasis.

I do not understand the sentence "This aspect is even more significant if we consider that non-small cell cancer was involved"? The majority of metastasis of the TMJ are adenocarcinomas deriving from the breast, prostate, colon, etc. In case of the lung being the primary site also squamous cell carcinoma is common.
Figures: I think an x-ray is absolutely necessary to show the preoperative situation.

Figure 3: The magnification as well as the kind of staining must be added to the figure legends. In general the quality of the figure 3 is very poor.

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

authorship: change "of the" into "of the"

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

Figure 2: Change "surgical view" into "intraoperative view"

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: Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited