Reviewer's report

Title: Management approach for recurrent spontaneous pneumothorax in consecutive pregnancies based on clinical and radiographic findings

Version: 1 Date: 12 September 2006

Reviewer: Janet M Shapiro

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General
This is an interesting report about an important, potentially life-threatening disorder in a pregnant patient. I believe that it lacks sufficient information and discussion but could be improved. Was a chest CT scan performed to evaluate the parenchyma and presence of bullae or cysts? The differential diagnosis of pneumothorax in a young woman does include diseases such as lymphangioleiomyomatosis, Langerhans histiocytosis (eosinophilic granuloma or histiocytosis X) which may have characteristic radiographic findings. Tuberous sclerosis is also a consideration. With the presence of apical blebs on the first surgery and the history of cigarette smoking, one may evaluate for alpha 1 antitrypsin deficiency with serologic testing and chest CT to evaluate the extent of emphysema. There are reports of pneumothorax in pregnancy due to these disorders, as well as cocaine use which should be addressed. The discussion should include more about the management. There are reports of thoracoscopic surgery for pneumothorax in pregnancy, and the authors may describe their indications. I do not think that the figure or table add much to the text.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)
The authors should describe the specific diagnostic considerations of pneumothorax in pregnancy, suggested evaluation (laboratory and radiographic) and then more specifics of the management. I agree that smoking cessation is definitely indicated in the management.

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)

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