Reviewer's report

Title: Mitral valve surgery for mitral regurgitation caused by Libman-Sacks endocarditis: a report of four cases and a systematic review of the literature

Version: 1 Date: 20 January 2010

Reviewer: Nicolas Doll

Reviewer's report:

This Manuscript presents an overview (Systematic Review of the Litterature) about Mitral Valve Endocarditis caused by sterile verrucous vegetative lesions which are described as Libman-Sacks endocarditis. The authors of this manuscript have further explored the relationship between the Libman-Sacks endocarditis and both systemic lupus erythematosus as well as antiphospholipid syndrome. Furthermore the authors have presented four cases of Mitral Valve Libman-Sacks endocarditis in the period from 1995 to 2008. The outcomes and literature review were further discussed in this manuscript.

This is an overall well written comprehensive paper with minor grammatical mistakes.

Furthermore, taking into consideration that this is a retrospective study and the small number of cases included, there are some issues which needs to be pointed out for further improvement of the quality of the paper:

1. Case reports descriptions are very lengthy which is arduous to the readers and should concentrate to the facts relevant to the topic.

2. The systematic review section of the paper needs to be further elaborated as the reader should be able to retrace the results of the review. Furthermore, more information needs to be provided such as; Overview of the methodology, strengths and limitations of the systematic review process, quality of the included publications, definition of the evaluation criteria, etc.

3. Discussion section of this manuscript is very extensive and needs to be shortened for further improvement of the paper’s quality.

This systematic literature review has its limitations and further work should be done to improve the quality of this paper.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to participate in the review process of your journal.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published
Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.