Reviewer’s report

Title: Mesenteric panniculitis of the sigmoid colon. A case report and review of the literature

Version: 3 Date: 14 June 2007

Reviewer: Maurice Lutgens

I am familiar with the literature and believe that this case meets one of the 7 criteria for evaluation in the journal: Unexpected or unusual presentations of a disease

Has the case been reported coherently?: Yes

Is the case report authentic?: Yes

Is this case worth reporting?: No

Is the case report persuasive?: No

Does the case report have explanatory value?: Yes

Does the case report have diagnostic value?: No

Will the case report make a difference to clinical practice?: No

Comments to authors:

General

Strong points:
1. I commend the authors on a well structured case report that takes the reader though the rare clinical case of mesenteric panniculitis (MP) of the sigmoid colon in an informative way.
2. A thorough presentation of the clinical case is made. Symptoms at presentation, pre-operative diagnostic results, surgical and histopathological findings are all profoundly and accurately described.
3. The authors explain and bring to attention the lack of knowledge about the natural history of MP and the difficulties in diagnosis which asks for more research.

Recommendations:
1. A more thorough search on relevant literature would place the case report in a better context. An up to date Medline/pubmed and embase search would strengthen the case report.
2. Report the search strategy for relevant literature
3. A table summarizing all relevant publications

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Revisions necessary for publication

1. The aim of the authors is to present the rare clinical case of MP of the sigmoid colon in which they excellently succeed. However, their case report is not authentic and a search strategy for relevant literature is lacking. Therefore their secondary aim of a short review leaves to be desired. Moreover, recent literature on this subject is lacking in the discussion. The most recent reference by the authors is Karentzos et al whose review dates from 1990. Also a review dating from 1987 is referred to as evidence “until now”.

For example, a publication by Emory et al. in the Am J Surg Pathology from 1997(1) provides new insights in the disease entity as a whole and puts MP in the context of sclerosing mesenteritis (SM) and mesenteric lipodystrophy (ML) with overlapping histopathological features. Emory et al also present 19 more cases of SM, MP or ML of the mesocolon of which nothing is reported in the discussion of the current authors.

I would suggest a thorough up to date literature search to put this otherwise fine case report in context of current views and standings.
2. The written English needs some improvement. Sentences like "A 63 year old man was admitted to hospital with a 2 month complains of general weakness..." and "the patient was presented a diagnostic problem prior to operation..." need revision. Overall the text is good but attention needs to be made to articles and grammar. I suggest the authors to ask a native English speaker to check the case report for fluency.

References:


**What next?:** Revise and resubmit

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published