Reviewer's report

Title: Atypical haemolytic uraemic syndrome presenting initially as suspected meningococcal disease

Version: 2 Date: 27 March 2007

Reviewer: Houria Suzy Hassouna

I am familiar with the literature and believe that this case meets one of the 7 criteria for evaluation in the journal: An unexpected association between diseases or symptoms

Has the case been reported coherently?: Yes

Is the case report authentic?: Yes

Is this case worth reporting?: Yes

Is the case report persuasive?: Yes

Does the case report have explanatory value?: No

Does the case report have diagnostic value?: No

Will the case report make a difference to clinical practice?: Yes

Comments to authors:

General

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Revisions necessary for publication:
The Abstract needs serious revisions.

In the abstract under case presentation the authors state that subsequent investigations revealing a "very depressed platelet count and pronounced thrombocytopenia". A very depressed platelet count is a test result and thus agrees with subsequent investigations. However, pronounced thrombocytopenia is the clinical term assigned to a very depressed platelet count and it is not an investigation.

In the abstract under case presentation: I fail to grasp the logic behind a change in the diagnosis from meningococcal septicemia to HUS based solely on a very depressed platelet count, ie thrombocytopenia. This aspect of the case is well documented in the body of the article, but this is not reflected in the abstract.

In the abstract under the abstracted conclusion the following argument does not make much sense: "early recognition for suspected meningococcal disease in very young children is entirely appropriate but it can divert attention from other serious conditions". Also the authors mention in the abstracted conclusion an infection with E Coli O 157 whereas it is not mentioned in the abstracted case presentation.

Significant changes in the Abstract are sorely needed. In the body of the article, the case presentation is well documented and convincing and it does not require any changes.

What next?: Revise and resubmit

Quality of written English: Acceptable