Reviewer's report

Title: Brucella bacteremia in patients with acute leukemia: two case reports

Version: 2 Date: 7 September 2007

Reviewer: Fred Zar

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?: No

Is the case report persuasive?: No

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?: No

Comments to authors:

General
The authors report two cases of Brucellosis in patients seen at the King Faisal Specialist Hospital in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Both patients were neutropenic (the second borderline neutropenic) and both had leukemias. Unfortunately, brucella infection in patients with leukemia and/or neutropenii has already been well described in at least 4 prior papers:

1. Brucellosis in all patients with febrile neutropenia.
2. Febrile neutropenia caused by Brucella melitensis in a child with hypoplastic acute lymphoblastic leukemia.
4. Acute lymphoblastic leukemia associated with brucellosis in two patients with fever and pancytopenia.
The association between leukemia and brucellosis is clearly coincidental in areas endemic for brucella infection, and case number two actually had pre-existant infection. Thus, this manuscript offers nothing new to our understanding of acute leukemias or brucellosis in neutropenic patients.

Revisions necessary for publication
NONE

What next?: Reject

Quality of written English: Acceptable