Author's response to reviews

Title: Adult brain abscess associated with patent foramen ovale: Case report.

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Version: 3 Date: 20 July 2007

Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Editor(s) of the Journal of Medical Case Reports,

We hereby submit the revised article entitled “Adult brain abscess associated with patent foramen ovale: Case report.” for consideration for publication in the journal. We want to thank the reviewers for their constructive critiques. We have revised the manuscript accordingly, and hope that, in its present form, it will be acceptable for publication in the journal. Detailed changes applied to the paper to address the reviewer's concerns follow below (in italics). Changes in the manuscript are marked in red. We will be happy to further change the manuscript as required by the journal.

Sincerely

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Reviewer's report

Title: Adult brain abscess associated with patent foramen ovale: Case report.

Version: 2 Date: 21 June 2007

Reviewer: Kai-Kuen Leung

I am familiar with the literature and believe that this case meets one of the 7 criteria for evaluation in the journal: Findings that shed new light on the possible pathogenesis of a disease or an adverse effect

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?: Yes

Does the case report have diagnostic value?: Yes

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

Comments to authors:

General

The authors reported a rare but important association between a life threatening disease and a fairly common congenital condition.

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Revisions necessary for publication

1. The authors failed to include a previous report of two cases of patent foramen ovale suspected to be the cause of cryptogenic brain abscess. (Kawamata T, Takeshita M, Ishizuka N, Hori T: Patent foramen ovale as a possible risk factor
for cryptogenic brain abscess: Report of two cases. Neurosurgery 2001;49:204–207.) In this report, Kawamata et al. described two cases of brain abscess suspected to be related to dental infection and a right to left shunt (PFO).

Response: This reference was included in the revised version (ref 11). Additional 3 refs were included to support the discussion (refs 12-14).

2. Authors should perform a thorough literature search, summarize the findings and compare the findings with their case.

Response: We searched the literature for other similar cases. We summarized the findings and compared them to our case in a new paragraph in the Discussion section (page 5).

3. The normal chest X-ray and postoperative CT scan can be omitted.

Response: The normal chest X-ray and postoperative CT-scans were omitted.

4. The transesophageal echocardiography figures are too small and unclear. The quality of these figures should be improved and abnormal findings should be pointed out with arrows.

Response: The transesophageal echocardiography images were re-scanned, enlarged, and abnormal findings were pointed out with arrows. The legend to Figure 2 was re-written accordingly. The overall quality of the images could not be improved further, as only paper printouts, but no digital images were available.

5. Is a consumption of 65 pack-years fulfilled the criteria of heavy nicotine addiction? I usually use a score of 5 to 6 points in short Fagerstrom test to define heavy nicotine dependence.
Response: The patient had a Fagerstrom test score of 8, fulfilling the criteria for heavy nicotine dependence. This was added to the text (page 3).

What next?: Revise and resubmit

Quality of written English: Acceptable
Reviewer's report

Title: Adult brain abscess associated with patent foramen ovale: Case report.

Version: 2 Date: 16 July 2007

Reviewer: Kuo-Chin Huang

I am familiar with the literature and believe that this case meets one of the 7 criteria for evaluation in the journal: Findings that shed new light on the possible pathogenesis of a disease or an adverse effect

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?: Yes

Does the case report have diagnostic value?: Yes

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

Comments to authors:

The manuscript is well written and their result is quite interesting. As they mentioned in text, however, more cases will be needed for further implication in clinical practices.

What next?: Accept

Quality of written English: Acceptable