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.

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).

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

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

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.

**What next?:** Revise and resubmit

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable