Reviewer's report

Title: Proton pump inhibitor-responsive chronic cough without acid reflux

Version: 2 Date: 2 May 2007

Reviewer: Henry Kwok

I am familiar with the literature and believe that this case meets one of the 7 criteria for evaluation in the journal: An unexpected event in the course of observing or treating a patient

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

Revisions necessary for publication

Comments on Manuscript “Proton pump inhibitor-responsive chronic cough without acid reflux”.

Comments to the authors:
1) What is the present practice of using PPI for acid reflux related cough, and has your department been practicing this?
2) For both cases, why was 24 hour esophageal monitoring done after initial trial of PPI, and not before PPI was tried?
3) The authors mentioned that for these two cases, GERD might be caused by some factors except gastric acid. The factors mentioned include pepsin, bile acid and pancreatic enzymes. Although difficult to imagine any of these factors as the sole cause for cough in the two patients, had the authors attempted to prove their points by measuring these factors?
4) The second patient had some degree of bronchial hyperresponsiveness, and yet he did not respond to anti-inflammatory treatment. What had been done to investigate and explain this phenomenon?
5) The argument posed in paragraph 3 of the Discussion section stated that “although bronchial hyperresponsiveness to methacholine was revealed, (the patient) was not thought to suffer from bronchial asthma or CVA because no eosinophil was shown in his bronchoalveolar lavage fluid and neither bronchodilator therapy nor glucocorticosteroid therapy improved his cough.” (page 10) is debatable as the authors are rejecting the diagnosis of asthma based on results from bronchoalveolar lavage.
6) I will suggest rewriting the “Discussion and Conclusion” section with more readable English. Also, is it possible to put the figure legends next to the diagrams, and not within the main text or title of the figures? This could help readers to more easily understand the diagrams and figures provided.

What next?: Accept after minor revisions

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