Reviewer's report

Title: Acute lethal intestinal gas gangrene of a 12 months old child after long-standing artificial nutrition as a cause of Pneumatosis coli: a case report

Version: 2 Date: 7 February 2008

Reviewer: Philipp Ströbel

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?: No

Comments to authors:

Kircher et al. describe a lethal case of intestinal clostridial infection associated with pneumatosis coli in a child. Their findings are of common interest and generally well described.

comments:
The conclusion of their abstract is difficult to read and should be rephrased.
Why do the authors think the germ was C. perfringens and not e.g. C. difficile (p.4)?
The potential causal chain (parenteral nutrition - clostridial infection - gas gangrene - PC) in the discussion should be emphasized more stringently; the author's own interpretation of the case is at the moment difficult to extract.

"artifical" nutrition should be mentioned as [artificial] parenteral nutrition throughout the text
From the descriptions in the Case Presentation section, it appears that the acute symptoms lasted only one day - the time course should be specified more clearly
What next?: Accept after minor revisions

Quality of written English: Acceptable