Reviewer’s report

Title: Graft versus EBV-related posttransplantation lymphoproliferative disease

Version: 2 Date: 8 June 2008

Reviewer: Eeva Juvonen

I am familiar with the literature and believe that this case meets one of the 9 criteria for evaluation in the journal: None

Has the case been reported coherently?: No

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?: Yes

Will the case report make a difference to clinical practice?: No

Is the anonymity of the patient protected?: Yes

Comments to authors:

The authors described a patient with refractory lymphoplasmacytic lymphoma transplanted from an HLA-identical sibling. The lymphoma progressed and transformed during the conditioning i.e. just before the transplantation. In the course of the disease the patients developed treatment refractory nodules and progressive erythema surrounding the nodules.

The finding of EBV positive nodules of lymphoma together with GV host / GV lymphoma reaction is interesting and possibly worth publishing as such. In the present form the paper contains some problems.

Most obviously the patient was heavily pre-treated with immunosuppressive drugs such as steroids and antibodies before the transplantation. Was EBV excluded from the samples showing relapse and transformation? Would it be possible that transformation in fact was lymphoproliferation caused by EBV-reactivation? It would be nice to get more accurate timing of the development of the nodules and progressive erythema in regard to the transplantation as well as the survival data of the patient.

What do the authors mean by graft versus (altered) host reaction? Was PTLD the altered host?? If so, why not simply use graft versus PTLD? Are the authors
claiming that massive diarrhea was a manifestation of EBV infection /reactivation? The patient most obviously had simultaneous acute GVHD in gut and, in any case, a skin biopsy does not exclude acute gut GVHD.

My suggestion is that the authors re-write the paper describing the histological finding of the skin biopsy and give more detailed information of the timing but leave out all speculation concerning treatment decisions and future works. The outcome of the case do not give rise to such speculations.

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.