Reviewer's report

Title: Rapidly progressing fatal acute promyelocytic leukemia first manifested as painful third molar: a case report

Version: 2 Date: 10 November 2008

Reviewer: David C. Williams

Which of the following best describes what type of case report this is?: Unexpected or unusual presentations of a disease

Has the case been reported coherently?: Yes

Is the case report authentic?: Yes

Is the case report ethical?: Yes

Is there any missing information that you think must be added before publication?: 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

Is the anonymity of the patient protected?: Yes

Comments to authors:

Is there any missing information that you think must be added before publication?

+Yes

The timeline of presentation and medical management not clear in the case report. On page 5, under Case Presentation, the wording is cumbersome and makes it very difficult to understand how many times the patient presented to the oral surgeon and outside hospital before being referred to the hospital. The abstract describes two tooth extraction procedures – but is not clear in the text when these procedures took place. Also, it would be very helpful to know what laboratory tests were performed, if any, at the time of each procedure. This
information is critical since, as the authors point out, the delay in therapy for acute promyelocytic leukemia likely contributed to the poor outcome. The importance of presenting this case is that while the patient had a serious underlying disease, that disease can be treated effectively if recognized in time. Unfortunately, the unusual presentation and delay in appropriate therapy likely contributed to his death. Hence it is very important to clearly describe the presentation and management so that readers can understand how that patient may have been managed differently. For example, should a complete blood count have been ordered when the patient presented for the second tooth extraction?

Comments to authors
-------------------

This case presentation “Rapidly progressing fatal acute promyelocytic leukemia first manifested as painful third molar: a case report” describes a relatively uncommon presentation of acute promyelocytic leukemia. The patient initially presented for a painful third molar that led to tooth extraction. The diagnosis of acute leukemia was not made until after some delay and unfortunately the patient died secondary to well known complications of acute promyelocytic leukemia. This case is interesting and should be reported to help other dental surgeons recognize when a more detailed history and laboratory workup should be performed to avoid a similar outcome.

However, the description of the case is difficult to understand and will need revision to improve the writing before it should be published (see the comments above).

**Quality of written English:** Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interest.