Reviewer's report

**Title:** Sodium valproate as a cause of recurrent transudative pleural effusion: a case report.

**Version:** 2  **Date:** 14 October 2008

**Reviewer:** Marco Cei

Which of the following best describes what type of case report this is?: Unreported or unusual side effects or adverse interactions involving medications

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?: No

Is this case worth reporting?: Yes

Is the case report persuasive?: Yes

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:**

This is an interesting and intriguing case, which shows the association between recurrent pleural effusion and valproate therapy. The authors stated that all previous reported cases are related to eosinophilic pleural effusion, but at least one case of lymphocytic pleural effusion has been previously reported [André S, Drowart A, De Bels D. Lymphocytic pleural effusion associated with valproic acid. Eur J Intern Med. 2005 Nov;16(7):535]. I suggest that authors must disclosure if if other treatments, in addition to the suspension of the drug (for example, antibiotics or steroids, or even colchicine), were administered to the patient. This patient has clearly a systemic disease, as demonstrated by the presence of fever, anemia and elevations of ESR and CRP; it is unclear how these findings can be attributed to valproate therapy. It is not clear if ESR elevation and
hematocrit (beyond CRP) were entirely returned to normal without valproate. Finally, I suggest that the authors must briefly discuss either Familial Mediterranean Fever in differential diagnosis of pleural effusion and myelodisplastic hemopoiesis in the differential diagnosis of anemia during valproate therapy.

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests