Reviewer’s report

Title: An Immunocompetent Individual Presenting with Plasmablastic Lymphoma In the Ano-Rectal Junction: A Case Report

Version: 2 Date: 3 June 2010

Reviewer: EDOARDO PESCARMONA

Which of the following 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?: 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:

GENERAL COMMENT

The Authors describe an original case of plasmablastic lymphoma in a HIV-patient. The main point of interest of the report is the unusual and previously undescribed anatomical site of involvement/biopsy (i.e. the ano-rectal junction). The paper might be improved by a more detailed report of the pathological findings (see comments to case presentation).

COMMENTS TO CASE PRESENTATION

1) A more detailed immunophenotypical characterization of the case is suggested. In particular, no findings about the expression of pertinent and
relevant markers such as MUM1/IRF4, PAX5, CD30, CD56, BCL2, KI67, EMA and HHV8/KSV(LANA) are reported by the Authors.

A more detailed immunophenotypical profile of the neoplastic cells (also including the "negative" markers) in our opinion would improve the quality of the manuscript.

2) The Authors state that the neoplastic cells were "negative for immunoglobulins light chains". Since most cases of plasmablastic lymphoma are known to be featured by the presence of cytoplasmic immunoglobulins (often with evidence of light chain restriction), do the Authors mean that they could not detect any (restricted) kappa or lambda light chain? If so, did the Authors investigate the expression (also) of immunoglobulin heavy chains (IgG,...). In our opinion, these points should be briefly clarified a/o completed by the Authors.

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Declaration of competing interests:

"I declare that I have no competing interests"