Reviewer's report

Title: Spontaneous pneumothorax from cryptococcal pneumonia in systemic sclerosis: a case report

Version: 1 Date: 15 November 2010

Reviewer: Mohammad M Sajadi

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?: No

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

Is the anonymity of the patient protected?: Yes

Comments to authors:

This is a case report of cryptoccocal infection associated with pneumothorax in a patient with systemic sclerosis. While there is an elevated chance of pneumothorax with pulmonary fibrosis in systemic sclerosis, the authors hypothesis that cryptoccoccus contributed to this is entirely possible, especially as cryptoccoccus was detected from the pleural space. I think the authors should include details of the crypto ag testing (titers and if cultures were also done). Finally, some areas related to quality of English need to be cleaned up. Examples:

Abstract: "Spontaneous pneumothorax is mostly found in systemic sclerosis patients
who had an extensive pulmonary fibrosis with enlarged subpleural bleb."

"had should be "have"

Abstract: "We report spontaneous pneumothorax from cryptococcal pneumonia in systemic sclerosis with minimal subpleural emphysema." should be .....in a patient with systemic sclerosis.....

"Pleural fluid which should not be found in ipsilateral lung of pneumothorax could be a clue of a pre-existing pulmonary infection." This should be changed. I think the authors are says that "pleural fluid that is present but not initially seen because of pneumothorax could clue of a pre-existing pulmonary infection.

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Declaration of competing interests:

'I declare that I have no competing interests'