Reviewer's report

Title: Primary follicular lymphoma of the epididymis t(14;18)(q32;q21)/IGH-BCL2-positive: a case report

Version: 2 Date: 19 August 2011

Reviewer: Andreas Chott

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?: 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 case report of Tralongo et al. describes the very rare event of a primary follicular lymphoma (FL) of the epididymis occurring in a 90 years-old patient.

Major points

1. According to WHO 2008 the diagnosis should be „follicular lymphoma, low grade (grade 1/2)“.
2. Failing to demonstrate immunoreactivity for BCL2 in a t(14;18)+ FL may be due to somatic mutations of the translocated BCL2 gene which may prevent epitope recognition of a given BCL2 antibody. Therefore, false negativity for BCL2 should be ruled out by testing with at least one further BCL2 antibody, such as that derived from clone E17 by Zytomed or another company.
3. The proliferation rate of 60%, as assessed by Ki-67 staining, is markedly higher as expected for FL, low grade. This issue should be discussed briefly, for example in context with Ref. Wang SA, et al., Am J Surg Pathol 29:1490, 2005.

4. Page 8. It is not true that “the techniques of molecular biology” only allow to arrive at the diagnosis of FL, even in cases of putative BCL2 negativity. Several histological and immunohistological features, such as CD10+ cells in groups/sheets outside the neoplastic follicles, should enable the experienced pathologist to do the job. In the vast majority of cases demonstration of BCL2 rearrangement, either by PCR or even better by FISH, is of confirmatory nature only. The same holds true for IGH clonality determination.

5. The single reasonable conclusion is to be prepared for the very rare event of a FL occurring in the epididymis.

Minor points

1. There are a lot of typographical and stylistic errors
2. The source and clone of the antibodies used should be provided

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

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests