Author's response to reviews

Title: Benign Minor Salivary Gland Neoplasms: A Clinical Analysis of Nine New Pediatric and Adolescent Cases and a Review of the Literature

Authors:

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Reviewer: Mohamed Jaber

Comments to authors:

GENERAL: Please note our study involves a dental school-based oral pathology service cohort. Our purpose is to investigate the clinical features and biologic behavior of a series of benign epithelial minor salivary gland neoplasms..... Note: In the Introduction Section 2nd para we inadvertently stated “….a series of benign and malignant…..” We have deleted “and malignant.”

2. Introduction

“Aims and objective of the study should be made more simple, clear and short.”

We are not sure how to be more simple, clear and concise. In our opinion our aim is straightforward and that is to essentially report on 9 new intraoral minor salivary gland neoplasms in patients under 19 years of age and review the literature.

3. Materials & Methods

The Material and Methods section (1st para) has been expanded to specifically address the questions and concerns of the Reviewer.

5. Discussion

1st Bullet: We have attempted to address the limitations of this type of study and per the reviewer’s recommendations they can be found in the 1st para of the Discussion.

2nd Bullet: It was not our intent to use this retrospective data to study the prevalence of diseases. In order to clarify, our revision comments reflect only on the prevalence of benign minor salivary gland neoplasms in the LSUSD material (See Results Section, Prevalence subsection).

3rd Bullet: We have added comments on socio-economic status as it applies to our study. (See Discussion Section, 1st para)

7. References

“Some of the references do not conform to the journal style”

We carefully checked each one and had them verified by our librarian.
Conclusion:

5. Clarity

“Lacks clarity especially material and methods section and discussion section.”

We have attempted to address the concerns listed above regarding the presumed deficiencies in the Materials & Methods and Discussion sections. We believe our response in these sections is clear and to the point. We will certainly address any specific areas that need clarification or explanation if the reviewer will specifically address the areas of concern.

Summary and Conclusion of Reviewer:

Authors need to be concise & to the point in delivering their data. This means material & methods section and discussion section can be revised. This sharpness may help against the lack of novel information. The discussion section also could be more streamlined to make points more crisply.

We have revised the Material & Method section and Discussion Section in an attempt to make it more concise.

**Reviewer: Deepak Mehta**

Comments to authors:

“This paper is not very coherent and needs major editing.”

We believe the revision as submitted is well organized, clear and coherent. We will be happy to address any specific comments or statements that are construed as disjointed or confusing to the reviewer.

“In the abstract instead of clubbing the findings from literature the findings in your series needs to be highlighted.”

We are in agreement with Reviewer Jaber that the abstract is “entirely appropriate.” The LSUSD series of 9 cases is small and therefore we believe it is more meaningful to combine the data from the literature, which is also relatively small in order to report meaningful data.

“When describing mean age then the range followed by the mean needs to be done.”

There is only one place in the manuscript where age range and mean age is used together and that is in the 1st sentence of the Results Section, Pleomorphic Adenoma
Subsection, and it appears to be appropriately written per the reviewers preference that the mean age should follow the age range.

“First the results in your series need to be reported and then compared to the reports in the literature.”

The LSUSD small sample size had no outlanders when compared to the relatively small number of well documented cases in the literature and therefore did not warrant “comparing the LSU cases with the literature cases” in our opinion. To us it was more meaningful to combine the data. The LSUSD data and literature data is clearly stated and available for comparison in the tables provided.

“There doesn’t seem to be anything novel in the findings from your series.”

Since minor salivary gland neoplasms are rare in this age group with only a sparse number of well documented cases in the literature, we believe that adding 9 new cases in order to give more recognition to this rare occurrence of minor salivary gland neoplasms in children and adolescents has merit by increasing our knowledge.

“Any risk factors (eg bone involvement, margins, size of lesions) predicted recurrences? This will add more value to the paper.”

A discussion of the risk factors including presence or absence of bone involvement, margins, and lesion size have been addressed in the Discussion section, para 4

Comments to Editor:

1. Since submitting the manuscript the Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology has been redesignated “Division of Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology” and this has been changed on the title page.

2. Since submitting the manuscript follow-up information has been received on two LSUSD cases and this is reflected in Table 1 and the manuscript.

3. We believe our revised manuscript to be well written, concise and has been reviewed prior to submission by our school editor. Comments by the reviewers that the paper should be more clear, more concise and streamlined are somewhat puzzling to us. Some of their recommendations have actually made the manuscript more verbose with the addition of comments that are in our opinion unnecessary and add nothing to the paper. Nevertheless, we have made a sincere attempt to “streamline with clarity” the areas of concern to the reviewers.

Respectfully,

P. Ritwik