Reviewer’s report

Title: A person presenting with common yew intoxication: a case report.

Version: 1 Date: 16 August 2013

Reviewer: ANASTASIA MICHELI

Which of the following following best describes what type of case report this is?: New associations or variations in disease processes

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?: Yes

Is the anonymity of the patient protected?: Yes

Comments to authors:

Dear Authors,

During medical history there are only a few cases reported describing a positive outcome after yew poisoning, mostly due to the severity of intoxication and the lack of a specific antidote.

According to the authors, the conventional treatment with anti-arrhythmic drugs, temporary heart stimulation and finally extracorporeal circulation wasn’t sufficient enough to stabilize blood circulation. Treatment with DigiFab seems to provide cardiovascular stabilization.

According to previous case reports there is no clear beneficial effect from the administration of DigiFab. Moreover, it is clearly mentioned that it could be utilized as an additional medicament, supporting the conventional treatment.
In this particular case report, DigiFab seems to play crucial role in patient’s outcome, which is probably based on the pathophysiological similarity between yew and digitalis intoxication.

It is unclear however, how the authors managed to obtain the patient’s written informed consent since he presented a persisting neurological deficit after treatment.

Furthermore, it is of crucial importance that the DigiFab dosage should be mentioned, since it could be helpful for the treatment of yew intoxication by other fellow physicians.

Finally, in page 4 it would be probably more accurate and appropriate for the medicines to be cited with their generic names (Cordarone and Cardilan respectively).

With best wishes,
Anastasia Micheli, PhD
Lecturer in internal medicine

Quality of written English: Acceptable