Reviewer’s report

Title: Clinical Features and Outcomes of Foot Keloids Treated Using Complete Surgical Excision and Full Thickness Skin Grafting Followed by Corticosteroid Injections Combined with Applications of Silicone Gel Sheeting

Version: 1 Date: 20 April 2013

Reviewer: Michael Tirgan

Reviewer’s report:

I commend Dr. Park and his colleagues for providing us with a summary of their experience and their results in treating dorsal pedal keloids in 79 patients. I enjoyed reading the manuscript, yet there is plenty of room for improving it. Here are my comments.

All my comments fall under Major Compulsory Revision requests.

1- Abstract:
Park et.al are reporting on their experience in a large cohort of patients with this rather rare type of keloid. The manuscript seems to be a report of the treatment outcomes and not the report of a previously planned clinical research study. If this is the case, the authors should revise the manuscript and clarify exactly what the study was. Term “study” refers to a well designed research program with a research protocol, IRB approval, etc. The manuscript provides the institutional results of a particular therapeutic approach, and not of a research program.

If the authors chose the term “study” as the retrospective study of their data, this has to be more clearly defined in the abstract and the body of the manuscript.

2- Abstract, line 30
Please provide a brief summary of the finding, with the number of patients, etc in your Result section, line 30. Stating “Most patients reported ----“, is conclusion and not actual results.

3- Line 31
It is not clear whether the term “Treatment protocol” that is used in the manuscript refers to a research or experimental protocol that the authors used, or a standard of practice that the institution had accepted and chosen as their preferred method. This needs to be clarified.

4- Line 55, study design, inclusion, exclusion criteria
I am not clear as to whether the subjects treated were treated on a prospective research protocol and the inclusion/exclusion criteria applied to the research protocol? OR, the in/exclusion criteria applies to the patients that the authors retrospectively choose to study? Please clarify this.
5- Tables 1 and 2
I did not see the table 1 and table 2. They are missing from the manuscript.

6- Average age, Line 111
Is this average age of the participants in the study? Or age of onset of keloid in the study cohort?

7- Fear, Line 140
Risk of radiation is very real. Secondary neoplasms have been reported in young individuals who have been treated for benign skin conditions. The reason to avoid radiation is not “fears of parents”. Please revise this section and state the actual risk of radiation in young adults.

8- Conclusion section, line 160,
This section needs to be expanded. Based on their very valuable experience, authors should make strong recommendations to the readers about their proposed method for treatment of foot keloids.

9- Authors should report on the incidence of keloid formation at the site where they harvested the skin for grafting and the healing of the skin at the donor site.

10- Authors should comment on the fact that their patients are oriental and these results may not apply to Africans, or African Americans, as the biology of the disease may be different among different races.

11-Typographical and grammar error
There are several “writing” errors that need to be corrected. I strongly recommend that the authors utilize a professional American / British medical writing service provider to review the manuscript and revise/rewrite the text. There are numerous writing issues. Here are some examples of writing errors.

Line 61 Can understood,
Line 87 Independent two physicians
Line 104 Frequency of --- to become high.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.
Declaration of competing interests:

No conflicts.