Reviewer’s report

Title: Invasive Pseudomembranous Upper Airway and Tracheal Aspergillosis Refractory to Systemic Antifungal Therapy and Serial Surgical Debridement in an Immunocompetent Patient

Version: 0  Date: 04 Nov 2019

Reviewer: Andreas H. Groll

Reviewer's report:

The manuscript submitted by Khan and colleagues reports the unique case of recalcitrant invasive pseudomembranous upper airway and tracheal aspergillosis in an apparently non-immunocompromised patient.

I have the following comments and/or suggestions:

1. Title: I suggest to remove the expression 'first case' - it is not needed to make the case interesting, and the remainder of the title is self-explanatory.

2. Abstract: The abstract is way too long - the essential points can be made in 50% of its present volume - the text of the background section would just be fine. If sections are needed, pl. shorten accordingly.

3. Introduction: The last sentence of the introduction may be removed.

4. Case report, line 51: Were there any other abnormal findings on chest CT initially or during the course of her illness? I would wish to have a representative section of both CTs in the report for documentation, or at least a representative chest x-ray to exclude the presence of lower airway involvement.

5. Case report, line 80: In my opinion, this patient would need a more detailed work up by Immunology for defects in T-cell function, immune signaling and defects in mucosal immunity; this is clearly justified by the extent and duration of her illness.
6. Case report, throughout: I am also not sure about the role of corticosteroids for maintaining the infection. It seems that the patient was most of the time on inhaled steroids +/- steroid rinses, which also are risk factors to develop oropharyngeal candidiasis. Please clarify the exact supportive treatment of the patient.

7. Case report, line 94: What were the doses of voriconazole, and what was the exact exposure to the drug? Pl. clarify.

8. Discussion, line 190: Pl. see point 4.

9. Conclusions, line 209: pl. see comment 5.

**Are the methods appropriate and well described?**
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Unable to assess

**Does the work include the necessary controls?**
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Unable to assess

**Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?**
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

**Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?**
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

Not relevant to this manuscript

**Quality of written English**
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable
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