Reviewer's report

Title: Primary gastric actinomycosis: Report of a case diagnosed in a gastroscopic biopsy

Version: 2 Date: 21 December 2014

Reviewer: Jeff Garner

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Minor Essential revisions

Many thanks for allowing me to review this interesting report. In general I would support publication but there are some areas of the narrative that MUST be clarified before publication:

Background

Why is the literature search only to 2010. Is this a very old case or is there nothing since 2010, in which case the search is until 2014 - it seems an odd date to pick and makes it look as if this is an old report

The fact that the diagnosis was made by gastroscopy needs explaining. Currently there is a bit of a 'so what' response to that phrase - I think the authors must expand on the significance of this further

Case Presentation

The presentation is without fever and no mention is made of an elevated white cell count or other inflammatory markers so the rationale for levofloxacin and metronidazole initially is completely unsubstantiated. It must be explained why the antibiotics were given.

The patient was managed conservatively - how? The literature suggests prolonged antibiotic therapy is required yet this gent got 6 doses and was discharged apparently. Why did the authors feel he did not need prolonged antibiosis. Was any follow up undertaken, such as repeat gastroscopy to ensure everything had settled down?

Discussion

What were the medications he was on. The authors suggest they may have allowed mucosal damage in the stomach allowing actinomyces to penetrate - details of the drugs is needed.

Lines 168-173 simply repeat the case presentation and can be omitted

Line 190. Why was no specific Actinomyces culture performed. The cultures from the first gastroscopy yielded Gram positive rods consistent with Actinomyces but yet no specific culture performed. This appears to be a significant omission and should be explained.
More discussion about why such a short duration of antibiosis was undertaken is needed as it seems to contradict the majority of the literature on the subject.

Conclusion
Line 207/8 is somewhat ironic as they alert the pathologist to perform the specific cultures which they didn't do themselves even when they had the suspicion of the disease.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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

Declaration of competing interests:
'I declare that I have no competing interests'