Reviewer's report

Title: A case of localized tracheobronchial relapsing polychondritis with positive matrilin-1 staining

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Reviewer: Angelo Gaffo

Reviewer's report:

This is an interesting case report. The authors present a case of a patient with underlying systemic sclerosis who has tracheobronchial inflammation and on biopsies is found to have positive staining for matrillin-1 in the tracheal tissue but not in the auricular cartilage.

Many observations in this report follow:

- The title is quite confusing and I do not believe it conveys properly what was done. I do not pretend to re-write the report for the authors but might suggest: "A case of localized tracheobronchial relapsing polychondritis with positive matrilin-1 staining"

- The authors use "trachea-bronchiole" throughout the manuscript but, like in ref 14, "tracheobronchial" seems the right way to describe this.

- The references the authors present for matrillin proteins are outdated. I could find updated references with a simple PubMed search. The authors might consider updating the background and discussion.

- Doubt a case reports needs a whole methods section. The immunochemical technique could be included in the case report itself.

- This patient had systemic sclerosis in the background. Any discussion of the role this could have played in the presentation? Also would mention in the discussion that RPC commonly presents in association with other autoimmune diseases.

- Please review spelling throughout the manuscript - many mistakes, e.g; "cartridge" for "cartilage"; "matrillin" is misspelled many times. This makes the manuscript not-acceptable at the moment.

- Please clarify why this patient had a ear biopsy. Was it to clarify diagnosis of RPC (medical care) or to explore the issue of matrillin (research). If the former is true then an ethics committee/IRB and a consent would have been needed.

- Probably more insight is needed from the authors on the implication of this finding - if confirmed - for RPC. Will it be important in clarifying pathogenesis, diagnostic testing, therapeutics?

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

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

No

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

Yes

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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

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Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Needs some language corrections before being published

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