

ANSWERING REVIEWERS

June, 2014

Dear Editor,

Please find enclosed the edited manuscript in Word format (file name: 10596-review.doc).

Title: UNEXPECTED IMPORTED MALARIA IN A CASE OF SUDDEN INFANT DEATH

Author: Teresa Pusiol, Anna M. Lavezzi, Ferdinando Radice, Graziella Alfonsi, Luigi Maturri

Name of Journal: *World Journal of Clinical Infectious Diseases*

ESPS Manuscript NO: 10596

The manuscript has been improved according to the suggestions of reviewers. Below, please find our point-by-point responses (in **bold font**).

- **1 Reviewer 02445058**

-This is an interesting case report of malarial infection and sudden death of a baby that is written very poorly. A 4 month-old female baby traveled to endemic area Pakistan and became infected and suddenly died in sleep. The title may be improved “Unexpected” rather than “not suspected”.

Reply – We have modified the Title replacing “NOT SUSPECTED” with “UNSUSPECTED”, as suggested.

-The manuscript needs to be written in better English to make better sense. The way explained as a newborn giving the notion of the congenital disease. However, obviously the 4 month old baby was travelling and exposed to malaria in Pakistan. Authors may consider using baby or infant rather than newborn or neonate not to confuse with congenital in this case.

Reply – We have replaced the word “newborn” in the text with “baby” or “infant”.

-To improve wordings and spellings to improve: unfortunately postponed diagnosis. 4month old, neonate and newborn then daughter,

Reply – the English text has been improved.

-Summary: Redundancies need to be eliminated, and better organized shortened, around approximately.

Reply – The summary has been reduced by eliminating the redundancies.

-Female is not he but she.

Reply – We apologize for the mistake. It has been corrected.

-Authors write: Unexpectedly, observation of blue-black bodies into erythrocytes, I assume they mean after autopsy in stained blood smear they found the malarial organisms.

Reply - We have clearly specified that the blue-black bodies were found into vessels visible in histological sections (not in blood smears).

-Case report, the baby was dead, four sentences later explained: was without breathing and heartbeat signs. Several sentences later then resuscitation was done and diagnosed dead. Firstly, an in-depth study of the autonomic nervous system, performed.. Again the baby was dead;

Reply – We have made these sentences easier to understand, specifying “Despite the attempts of resuscitation, physicians confirmed the absence of vital signs and then the death.”

-I assume in pathological investigation they examined CNS sections or slides. Blue black bodies better explained as intererythrocytic organelles Then the examination was extended to samples of all organs. It is very difficult if not possible to detect organisms free in the capillary, but intercellular mostly in RBCs, before Perl test which demonstrate iron leakage. This needs better organization and explanation.

Reply –The findings requested by the first reviewer have been reported.

-Conclusion: does not make sense.

Reply – The conclusions have been eliminated.

-Figures are not sharp but include unnecessary different magnifications. All low mag extra Figs 1-5 need to be eliminated to only present the highest magnification like fig 1-c, fig 2 b. and fig 3. and 5.

Figure 4 is not clear. A better High mag is needed with addition of arrows to specify which is hemozoin or hemosiderin, otherwise to eliminate this fig.

Reply – We have modified the figures, as suggested. In addition, we have reported the legends of the figures in a separate section of the manuscript.

- **2 Reviewer 00289622**

-This poorly written case report describes an unexpected death of a baby after malaria infection, who visited a malaria endemic country in Asia. To me this could be circumstantial than the real cause. No doubt that the infant had malaria infection but the death could be because of other congenital/hereditary diseases or even drug overdose. No special effort has been made to underscore these possibilities.

Reply – In the “Case presentation” we have precised: *“The autoptic examination did not show a clear cause of death by excluding important disease processes and/or congenital malformations.”*

-The authors need to investigate the family record and incorporate them in this report. It is not clear in which month they travelled to Pakistan, how long they stayed and within how many days after arriving to Italy the infant died.

Reply - In the Introduction we already have reported: “Here we report a case of unsuspected and unfortunately posponed diagnosis of malaria in an infant female 4 month-old, suddenly died in Italy, his native country, two weeks after a Christmas holiday spent in Pakistan, the land of his parents, notoriously at high malarial endemicity.” However, following the suggestion of the Reviewer, we have added new more in-depth information in the “Case presentation”.

-Although the pictures are okay they need to be explained properly. Lot of repetition of sentences and grammatical errors make this case report difficult to read and comprehend. For example, "not suspected" should be "unsuspected".

Reply – The legends of Figures and the English text have been improved. The words “not suspected” have been replaced by “unsuspected”.

- **3 Reviewer 00506423**

-The manuscript is a case report of interest in the area of health, as it can lead to greater awareness among those responsible for the area, to the attention of individuals and newborns who travel from endemic areas in malaria to non-endemic areas.

Reply – Thanks for the positive comment.

- **4 Reviewer 00502947**

This MS reports a case documenting that a baby believed to have died from SIDS was retrospectively diagnosed with falciparum Malaria which appeared to be contracted while holidaying with her parents in Pakistan. There have been many reported cases of retrospectively diagnosed malaria. However I think that not any where SIDS was suspected to be cause of death. The report is a reminder to the physician that they have to be vigilant when engaging the patient or parents. Some issues for authors to address.

-The English expression requires attention throughout the MS. Change the word “his” to “her”. Change the words “not suspected” to “unsuspected”. Delete the word “correct” from in front of diagnosis.

Reply- We have made the suggested corrections. In particular, the words “not suspected” have been replaced by “unsuspected”.

-Conclusion section: “signalling” not clear; do you mean the lesson learnt from this case?

Reply- This section has been removed, has suggested by the first Reviewer.

-Does your investigation exclude mixed vivax-falciparum infections

Reply- We have specified: “It was possible to recognize trophozoites, schizonts, merozoites and crescent-shape macrogametocytes (this distorted form of gametocytes in particular is specific of the Plasmodium falciparum cycle and allows the differentiation with other types of malarial infection)”

Thank you again for publishing our manuscript in the *World Journal of Clinical Infectious Diseases*.

Sincerely yours,

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