

Dear Editor of World Journal of Clinical Cases

We would like to thank editors of World Journal of Clinical Cases and unknown reviewers of our manuscript for carefully reading our manuscript and providing such valuable comments. We have addressed the concerns of the respected reviewers as follows.

It is worth mentioning that in the revised manuscript, the updated text appears in blue colour.

Kind Regards

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### **Answering to Reviewer #1:**

Reviewer's Comment: The whole manuscript is full of grammatical errors. It requires the multiple corrections.

We have revised the grammatical errors as you guided (seen in the following sections). We are highly grateful for you to provide such valuable comments, and we have learned a lot in revising the article, which is great helpful in improving our English grammar.

#### **Title**

Reviewer's Comment: Page 1 Line 5: Add the word 'adult' before the word 'patients'.

We have added the word "adult" (Reflected in page 1, line 4).

Reviewer's Comment: Page 1 Line 5: The term "advanced aplastic anemia" is not correct. It should be "severe aplastic anemia" according to the literature. Replace the same in rest of the manuscript. If you feel necessary to use this term, kindly define it in Materials and methods section with quoting of reference article or study.

We have replaced "advanced aplastic anemia (advanced AA)" with "severe aplastic anemia (SAA)" throughout the manuscript.

#### **Running Title**

Reviewer's Comment: Page 1 Line 6: Not matched with main Title. Replace the term "SAA" with the term "advanced aplastic anemia" if you feel necessary to retain the term "advanced aplastic anemia" in this manuscript.

We have replaced "advanced aplastic anemia (advanced AA)" with "severe aplastic anemia (SAA)" throughout the manuscript. We think it is better to preserve the subtitle as "Abdominal CT imaging in SAA".

#### **Abstract**

Reviewer's Comment: Page 3 Line 12: Add the word 'adult' before the word 'patients'.

We have added the word "adult" (Reflected in page 3, line11 ).

Reviewer's Comment: Page 3 Line 12: Add the phrase 'during flared

inflammatory episodes' after the word 'AA'.

We have added the phrase "during inflammatory episodes ". The sentence is revised as "To explore CT imaging presentations of gut inflammatory damage in adult SAA patients during inflammatory episodes" (Reflected in page 3, line11-12 ).

Reviewer's Comment: Page 3 Line 14: Add the word 'adult' before the word 'patients'.

We have added the word "adult" (Reflected in page 3, line 13).

Reviewer's Comment: Page 3 Line 13: Omit the words 'chest and'.

We have depleted the word "chest and" (Reflected in page 3, line 12).

Reviewer's Comment: Page 3 Line 20: Replace the word 'recruited' with 'eligible'.

We have replaced the word "recruited" with "eligible" (Reflected in page 3, line 19).

Reviewer's Comment: Page 3 Line 20: Add the word 'CT' before the word 'imaging'.

We have added the word "CT" before the word "imaging" (Reflected in page 3, line 19).

Reviewer's Comment: Page 3 Line 29: Grammar. Place the comma after the word 'texture'.

We have placed a comma after the word "texture" (Reflected in page 3, line 27).

Reviewer's Comment: Page 4 Lines 7-11: Phrase 'According to the imaging features, a suggestive diagnosis of Crohn's disease was made in 5 patients, a suggestive diagnosis of ulcerative colitis was made in 1 patient, a suggestive diagnosis of chronic periappendiceal abscess was made in 1 patient, and a suggestive diagnosis of tuberculosis infection was made in 5 patients' should be cut short like 'According to the imaging features, a suggestive diagnosis of Crohn's disease was made in 5 patients, ulcerative colitis in 1 patient, chronic periappendiceal abscess in 1 patient, and tuberculosis infection in 5 patients'.

We have revised the sentence as “According to the imaging features, a suggestive diagnosis of Crohn’s disease was made in 5 patients, ulcerative colitis in 1 patient, chronic periappendiceal abscess in 1 patient, and tuberculosis infection in 5 patients” (Reflected in page 4, line 5-8).

Reviewer’s Comment: Page 4 Line 11: Grammar. Replace the word ‘was’ with ‘were’.

We have replaced the word “was” with “were” (Reflected in page 4, line 8).

Reviewer’s Comment: Page 4 Line 13: Add the word ‘CT’ before the word ‘imaging’.

We have added the word “CT” before the word “imaging” (Reflected in page 4, line 10).

Reviewer’s Comment: Page 4 Line 15: Add the phrase ‘during flared inflammatory episodes’ after the word ‘damage’.

We have added the words “during flared inflammatory episodes” (Reflected in page 4, line 12.)

## Introduction

Reviewer’s Comment: Page 5 Line 4: Replace the word ‘pancytopenia’ with ‘cytopenia’.

We have replaced the word “pancytopenia” with “cytopenia” (Reflected in page 5, line 4).

Reviewer’s Comment: Page 5 Line 6: Grammar. Place the comma after the word ‘signs’.

We have placed a comma after the word “signs” (Reflected in page 5, line 6).

Reviewer’s Comment: Page 5 Line 7: Grammar- ‘complication’ and ‘cause’ should be ‘complications’ and ‘causes’.

We have revised “complication” and “cause” with “complications” and “causes” (Reflected in page 5, line 7-8).

Reviewer’s Comment: Page 5 Line 11: Grammar- ‘could’ should be ‘can’.

We have replaced the word “could” with “can” (Reflected in page 5, line 11).

Reviewer’s Comment: Page 6 Line 15-19: Run on sentence. It would be easier

for the reader if the sentence is broken up.

We have revised the sentence as “Very recently, initiation and perpetuation of AA pathogenesis has been found to be associated with gut inflammatory disorders (GIDs)<sup>[7,8]</sup>. However, the role of GIDs in AA pathogenesis is overlooked likely due to the high prevalence and good tolerance of GIDs and the low incidence of AA” (Reflected in page 6, line 15-19).

Reviewer’s Comment: Page 6 Line 7: Grammar. Place the comma after the word ‘nonspecific’.

We have added a comma after the word “nonspecific” (Reflected in page 6, line 7).

Reviewer’s Comment: Page 6 Line 9: Grammar. Place the comma after the word ‘investigations’.

We have added a comma after the word “investigations” (Reflected in page 6, line 9).

Reviewer’s Comment: Page 6 Line 19: Add the word ‘adult’ before the word ‘patients’.

We have added the word “adult” before the word “patients” (Reflected in page 6, line 19).

Reviewer’s Comment: Page 6 Line 19: Add the phrase ‘during flared inflammatory episodes’ after ‘AA’.

We have added a phrase “during flared inflammatory episodes” after “SAA” (Reflected in page 6, line 19-20).

## Materials and methods

Reviewer’s Comment: Whole section of ‘Materials and methods’ is very poorly written. Kindly re-write this section including following suggestions along with improvement of grammar.

We have rewritten the section as you guided (Reflected from page 6 line 25 to page 9 line 27).

Reviewer’s Comment: Page 6 Line 24: Add the text mentioning the period and type of study conducted.

We have added sentences to denote the period and the type of the study, age range of studied participants, main clinical presentations, main treatment, inclusion criteria, and exclusion criteria and the reasons for exclusion of these patients from the study. The sentences are rewritten as “In this retrospective study, we reviewed the abdominal CT images in 17 hospitalized adult SAA patients who were treated at our center from October 2019 to March 2022, including 8 males and 9 females, with a median age of 55 years (ranging from 34 to 78 years). They were hospitalized due to rapidly exacerbated cytopenia, aggravated fatigue, varying degrees of febrile episodes and elevated inflammatory indices, indicating the presence of systemic inflammatory responses<sup>[1-3]</sup>. Each patient was definitively diagnosed with SAA for more than 2 years, and the SAA progressed from non-SAA (NSAA) after the patients experienced various accelerating episodes. In addition to supportive care, they were routinely treated with cyclosporine (3-4 mg/kg·d), stanozolol (6-8 mg/d) and eltrombopag (50 mg/d) in the SAA stage, in the absence of any therapeutic responses. In the patients with very severe aplastic anemia (VSAA), recombinant human granulocyte colony-stimulating factor (rhG-CSF, 100-200  $\mu$ g/d) was added, without an evident increase in granulocytes. Patients who had diseases of portal hypertension, hepatic disease, pancreatic disease, cardiopulmonary disease, heart failure, severe hypoalbuminemia and ischemic enteropathy were excluded, because these diseases can cause stratified bowel wall thickening by blood congestion in the gastrointestinal tract, which may confound the imaging presentations of inflammatory lesions<sup>[16-18]</sup>. Abdominal CT was performed to search for the inflammatory niche before antibiotic and other treatments.” (Reflected from page 6 line 25 to page 7 line 15).

Reviewer’s Comment: Page 6 Line 24: Add the word ‘adult’ before the word ‘patients’ and mention the age range of study participants.

We have added “adult” before “SAA patients” (Reflected in page 6, line 26).

We have the mean age and age range (Reflected in page 6, line 27-28).

Reviewer's Comment: Page 6 Line 24: Define the diagnostic criteria for "advanced aplastic anemia" with quoting of reference article or study as suggested above.

We have replaced the "advanced aplastic anemia" with "severe aplastic anemia" throughout the manuscript.

Reviewer's Comment: Page 6 Line 24: Mention all the inclusion criteria collectively, followed by exclusion criteria.

We have added sentences to denote the period and the type of the study, age range of studied participants, main clinical presentations, main treatment, inclusion criteria, and exclusion criteria and the reasons for exclusion of these patients from the study.

Reviewer's Comment: Page 6 Line 25-27: It is unclear why other diseases were excluded. Mention the reason of exclusion of other diseases.

We have added the reasons for exclusion of mentioned diseases (Reflected in page 7, line 8-14) as "Patients who had diseases of portal hypertension, hepatic disease, pancreatic disease, cardiopulmonary disease, heart failure, severe hypoalbuminemia and ischemic enteropathy were excluded, because these diseases can cause stratified bowel wall thickening by blood congestion in the gastrointestinal tract, which may confound the imaging presentations of the inflammatory lesions<sup>[16-18]</sup>".

Reviewer's Comment: Page 6 Line 27-29: Mention the type of treatment received before and after definitive diagnosis of severe aplastic anemia (SAA) as well as at the time of CT imaging.

We have added sentences to describe the main treatments and the treatment responses in SAA stage. Because CT was performed at admission, the treatments after hospitalization were not mentioned (Reflected in page 7, line 3-7).

Reviewer's Comment: Page 6 Line 30: Add the subheading 'Study procedure' and include 'CT imaging modalities', 'CT image reviewing process' and 'Radiological manifestations suggesting the gut involvement of inflammatory

disorders' into it.

We added a subheading "Study procedure" and put the contents "CT imaging modalities", "CT image reviewing process" and "Radiological manifestations suggesting the gut involvement of inflammatory disorders" under the subheading (Reflected from page 7 line 21 to page 9 line 20).

Reviewer's Comment: Page 6 Line 30: Omit the words 'chest and' and replace the word 'were' with 'was'.

We have deleted the word "chest and" and replaced the the word "were" with "was" (Reflected in page 7, line 14).

Reviewer's Comment: Page 7 Line 2: Define the diagnostic criteria for 'flared systemic inflammatory stress' with quoting of reference article or study.

We have added a sentence to explain the cause of hospitalization and to express the presentations of flared systemic inflammatory stress as "They were hospitalized due to rapidly exacerbated cytopenia, aggravated fatigue, varying degrees of febrile episodes and elevated inflammatory indices, indicating the presence of systemic inflammatory responses<sup>[1-3]</sup>". (Reflected in page 6 line 28 to page 6 line 1).

Reviewer's Comment: Page 7 Line 4-11: Replace the whole text with phrase 'The modified Camitta criteria were used to assess severity of AA[3]'.

We have replaced the text with 'The modified Camitta criteria were used to assess severity of AA[3] (Reflected in page 7, line 16-20).

Reviewer's Comment: Page 7 Line 12: Include the Ethical approval number (IEC No.-----).

We have added the Ethical approval number as (No.2022-10-08) (Reflected in page 9, line 23).

Reviewer's Comment: Page 7 Line 12-16: Place the whole text either at the beginning of 'Materials and methods' section or at the end of it just before the subheading 'Statistical analysis'.

We have placed the text "This study was approved by the Institutional Review Board of The Central Hospital of Qingdao West Coast New Area and



followed the Declaration of Helsinki (No.2022-10-08). The requirement for written informed consent was waived by the Review Board since this was a retrospective study, and no information about patient identification was revealed in the manuscript” before the subheading “Statistical analysis” (Reflected in page 9, line 21-25 ).

Reviewer’s Comment: Page 7 Line 18-19: Omit the word ‘recruited’. Improve grammar. Replace the word ‘for’ with ‘in’ and ‘1 patients’ with ‘1 patient’.

We have deleted the word “recruited” and revised the word “for” to “in”. We have revised the word “patients” to “patient” (Reflected in page 7, line 24).

Reviewer’s Comment: Page 7 Line 18-19: It is unclear why authors used conventional CT instead of CECT in all except one patients as CECT would be better to delineate gastrointestinal inflammatory pathology.

Conventional CT is first performed in clinical practice. If some imaging abnormalities are unable to be determined by conventional CT, contrast-enhanced CT is performed. In most circumstances, conventional CT is sufficient to detect the morphological changes, and contrast-enhanced CT is waived, with a purpose to reduce the radiation dose.

## Results

Reviewer’s Comment: Page 9 Line 21: Omit the words ‘the recruited’.

We have deleted the words “the recruited” (Reflected in page 9, line 30).

Reviewer’s Comment: Page 9 Line 22: Replace the words ‘hematological diagnosis’ with ‘severity of AA’ and ‘history’ with ‘duration’. Do the corresponding corrections in Table 1.

We have revised the word “hematological diagnosis” to “severity of AA” and the word “history” to “duration” (Reflected in page 10, line 1). We carefully checked up the data in Table 1 and conformed the corresponding corrections with the data in the manuscript.

Reviewer’s Comment: Page 9 Line 26-28: Replace the word ‘history’ with ‘duration’. Do the corresponding corrections in Table 1.

We have revised the “history” to “duration” (Reflected in page 10, line 5-7).

We have verified the data in Table 1 with those in the manuscript.

Reviewer's Comment: Page 9 Line 28-30: Replace the phrase 'All patients met the diagnostic criteria for SAA, among whom 5 met the diagnostic criteria for VSAA according to the CBC results' with 'Among all patients, 5 had very severe AA (VSAA)'.

We have revised the sentence "All patients met the diagnostic criteria for SAA, among whom 5 met the diagnostic criteria for VSAA according to the CBC results" to "Among all patients, 5 had VSAA" (Reflected in page 10, line 8).

Page 9 Line 30: Replace the word 'palpable' with 'present'.

We have revised the word "palpable" to "present" (Reflected in page 10, line 7).

Reviewer's Comment: Page 11 Table 1: Title is not appropriate as table is not depicting treatment responses. Replace the title as 'Clinical characteristics of the study participants'.

We have revised the title as "Clinical characteristics and radiological diagnosis of the studied patients" (Reflected in page 11).

Reviewer's Comment: Page 11 Table 1: Capitalize the first letter of the word 'suggested'.

We have capitalized the first letter of the word "Suggested" (Reflected in page 11).

Reviewer's Comment: Page 11 Table 1: Do other corrections as suggested above for Page 9 Line 22 and 26-28.

We have verified the data with those in the manuscript and confirmed the corrections.

Reviewer's Comment: Page 12 Lines 11-14: Phrase 'According to the imaging features, a suggestive diagnosis of Crohn's disease was made in 5 patients, a suggestive diagnosis of ulcerative colitis was made in 1 patient, a suggestive diagnosis of chronic periappendiceal abscess was made in 1 patient, and a suggestive diagnosis of tuberculosis infection was made in 5 patients' should be cut short like 'According to the imaging features, a suggestive diagnosis of

Crohn's disease was made in 5 patients, ulcerative colitis in 1 patient, chronic periappendiceal abscess in 1 patient, and tuberculosis infection in 5 patients'.

We have revised the sentences to "According to the imaging features, a suggestive diagnosis of Crohn's disease was made in 5 patients, ulcerative colitis in 1 patient, chronic periappendiceal abscess in 1 patient, and tuberculosis infection in 5 patients" (Reflected in page 12 line 10-13).

Reviewer's Comment: Page 12 Line 14: Grammar. Replace the word 'was' with 'were'.

We have revise the word "" with "were" (Reflected in page 12, line 13).

Reviewer's Comment: Page 12 Line 16: Grammar. Replace the word 'list' with 'listed'. Mention the Table number as 'Table 1'.

We have replaced the word "list" with "listed" (Reflected in page 12, line 15).

## Discussion

Reviewer's Comment: Discussion is unnecessarily lengthy, include only key points relevant to the study.

Although the Discussion section is very long, we think such a Discussion section can optimally express the meanings we want to express and help readers to understand the meaningfulness and usefulness of the study. It is better to enumerate and describe the images in detail, which helps readers to identify the imaging presentations, because we have read many articles that described the imaging signs in this way and think it is very helpful for us to identify the imaging signs. In most hospital including ours, bowel inflammatory changes are frequently neglected by the radiologists and hence are rarely reported. We performed this study owing to the encouragement of a finding that gut inflammatory diseases play the most important role in the regulation of hematopoietic and immune functions, and treatment of the gut inflammatory diseases can significantly improve the hematological profile and other immune-mediated diseases. These disorders include exacerbated hematopoietic failure, acute episodes of exacerbated cytopenia in myelodysplastic syndrome, prolonged marrow suppression in acute myeloid

leukemia after intensive chemotherapies, granulocytopenia of unknown origin, acute renal failure with systemic inflammatory responses, asymptomatic hematuria, severe cutaneous pruritus of unknown origin, recurrent severe Schonlein-Henoch syndrome, and others. Patients with these diseases responded to different treatment protocols, which was associated with the site and the nature of the gut inflammatory diseases. We perform this study with the aim to provoke awareness of the gut inflammatory diseases in the pathogenesis of hematological and autoimmune disorders. In the treatment of these diseases, we found that patients with the major inflammatory lesions in the small intestines responded well to rifaximin, whereas patients with the major inflammatory lesions in the large intestines and ileocecal region responded well to salazosulfapyridine or combination of rifaximin and salazosulfapyridine, suggesting that inflammatory lesion in different intestinal segments, likely derived from different pathogenic factors, responded to different treatment protocols. We also tentatively treated with antituberculosis agents for patients whose imaging features suggested the possibility of tuberculosis infection and who were refractory to rifaximin and salazosulfapyridine. Identification of the radiological signs are highly useful in the identification of gut inflammatory damages and in guiding treatments.

Reviewer's Comment: Page 12 Line 23: Replace the word 'pancytopenia' with 'cytopenia'.

We have replaced the word "pancytopenia" with "cytopenia" (Reflected in page 12, line 22).

Reviewer's Comment: Page 12 Line 24: Grammar. Replace the word 'could' with 'can be'.

We have revised the phrase as "can be significantly improved" (Reflected in page 12, line 23).

Reviewer's Comment: Page 12 Line 23: Grammar. Replace the word 'improve' with 'improved'.

We have revised the phrase as "can be significantly improved" (Reflected in

page 12, line 23).

Reviewer's Comment: Page 13 Line 8: Grammar. Replace the word 'could' with 'can'.

We have replaced the word "could" with "can" (Reflected in page 13, line 7).

Reviewer's Comment: Page 13 Line 11: Add the word 'increased' before the word 'peripheral'.

We have added the word "increased" (Reflected in page 13, line 10).

Reviewer's Comment: Page 13 Line 21-26: Run on sentence. It would be easier for the reader if the sentence is broken up.

We have broken up the sentence and revised as "These structural and functional characteristics make the gastrointestinal tract the most vulnerable site for pathogen invasion and chemical injuries and the most common source of a continuous antigen supply. Therefore, the gastrointestinal tract become the most important site for pathological interactions between host immune cells and pathogenic antigens" (Reflected in page 13, line 20-25).

Reviewer's Comment: Page 14 Line 14: Replace the word 'cytopenia' with 'anemia'.

We have replaced the phrase "Immune-mediated aplastic cytopenia" with "AA" (Reflected in page 14, line 12).

Reviewer's Comment: Page 14 Line 20: Grammar. Replace the word 'could' with 'can'.

We have replaced the word "could" with "can" (Reflected in page 14, line 18).

Reviewer's Comment: Page 15 Line 17: Grammar. Replace the word 'affected' with 'led to'.

We have replaced the word "affected" with "led to" (Reflected in page 15, line 15).

Reviewer's Comment: Page 15 Line 20: Grammar. Replace the word 'describe' with 'described'.

We have replaced the word "describe" with "described" (Reflected in page 15, line 18).

Reviewer's Comment: Page 15 Line 20: Add the word 'CT' before the word 'imaging'.

We have added the word "CT" (Reflected in page 15, line 18).

Reviewer's Comment: Page 15 Line 22: Omit the word 'recruited'.

We have deleted the word "recruited" (Reflected in page 15, line 20).

Reviewer's Comment: Page 15 Line 22: Add the word 'CT' before the word 'imaging'.

We have added the word "CT" (Reflected in page 15, line 20).

Reviewer's Comment: Page 15 Line 26: Grammar. Replace the word 'could' with 'can'.

We have replaced the word "could" with "can" (Reflected in page 15, line 24).

Reviewer's Comment: Page 15 Line 29-30: Description of each case and corresponding Figure is not in same order. It would be easier for the reader if the Figures were listed in order according to order of cases. Do the same in rest of the manuscript.

The order in description of the imaging features of each case is in the category of major imaging findings. The cases with same major imaging findings were put together with the purpose to be described and discussed conveniently and hence understood easily. After careful consultation of our research group and solicitation of several readers' opinions, we think that the description in a categorical order in light of the major imaging findings is more easy to be understood (Reflected in page 15, line 17-19).

Reviewer's Comment: Page 16 Line 3-4: Grammar. Sentence is incomplete.

We have revised the sentence as "The fat halo sign which suggested the existence of active chronic gut inflammation was detected in 7 patients" (Reflected in page 16, line 1-3).

Reviewer's Comment: Page 16 Line 5: Omit the word 'recruited'.

We have deleted the word "recruited" (Reflected in page 16, line 3).

Reviewer's Comment: Page 16 Figure 1 footnote: Grammar. Replace the word 'cases 4' with 'case 4'.

We have replaced the word “cases 4” with “case 4” (Reflected in Figure 1)

Reviewer’s Comment: Page 18 Line 9: Grammar. Replace the word ‘could’ with ‘can’.

We have replaced the word “could” with “can” (Reflected in page 18, line 9).

Reviewer’s Comment: Page 19 Figure 3 footnote: Grammar. Replace the word ‘cases 3’ with ‘case 3’.

We have replaced the word “case 3” with “case 3” (Reflected in Figure 2)

Reviewer’s Comment: Page 38 Line 3: Omit the word ‘present’.

We have deleted the word “present” (Reflected in page 38, line 3).

Reviewer’s Comment: Page 38 Line 14: Replace the word ‘In’ with ‘During’.

We have replaced the word “In” with “During” (Reflected in page 38, line 14).

Reviewer’s Comment: Page 39 Line 2: Grammar. Replace the words ‘are’ with ‘is’ and ‘niches’ with ‘niche’.

We have replaced the word “are” with “is” and the word “niches” with “niche” (Reflected in page 39, line 5).

Reviewer’s Comment: Page 39 Lines 9-13: Phrase ‘In this study, a suggestive diagnosis of Crohn’s disease was made in 5 patients, a suggestive diagnosis of ulcerative colitis was made in 1 patient, a suggestive diagnosis of chronic periappendiceal abscess was made in 1 patient, and a suggestive diagnosis of tuberculosis infection was made in 5 patients’ should be cut short like ‘In this study, a suggestive diagnosis of Crohn’s disease was made in 5 patients, ulcerative colitis in 1 patient, chronic periappendiceal abscess in 1 patient, and tuberculosis infection in 5 patients’.

We have revised the sentences as you guided (Reflected in page 39, line12-15).

Reviewer’s Comment: Page 39 Line 16: The word ‘present’ would be better in place of ‘exhibited’.

We have replaced the word “exhibited” with “present” (Reflected in page 39, line 17).

Reviewer’s Comment: Page 39 Line 16: Grammar. Replace the word ‘is’ with ‘was’.

We have replaced the word “is” with “was” (Reflected in page 39, line 17).

Reviewer’s Comment: Page 39 Line 23: Grammar. Replace the word ‘endoscope’ with ‘endoscopic’.

We have replaced the word “endoscope” with “endoscopic” (Reflected in page 39, line 24).

Reviewer’s Comment: Page 39 Line 24: Grammar. Replace the word ‘contradiction’ with ‘contraindication’.

We have replaced the word “contradiction” with “contraindication” (Reflected in page 39, line 25).

Reviewer’s Comment: Page 39 Line 27: Grammar. Replace the word ‘incidences’ with ‘incidence’.

We have replaced the word “incidences” with “incidence” (Reflected in page 39, line 28).

## Conclusions

Reviewer’s Comment: ‘Conclusions’ section is poorly written. Kindly re-write this section including following suggestions along with improvement of grammar: Kindly explain how your study helps the physician in treatment. Add recommendations from your study.

We have rewritten the Conclusion section as “All patients with SAA during inflammatory episodes demonstrated gut involvement of both active chronic inflammatory conditions and acute inflammatory damage, providing further evidence to demonstrate the role of GIDs in the pathogenesis of immune-mediated hematopoietic failure. Although arriving at an etiopathological diagnosis frequently requires other laboratory tests, abdominal CT imaging can provide highly useful information for the exploration of gut inflammatory damage and is very helpful for the suggestion of an effective treatment modality. In patients with aggravated cytopenia and clinical presentations suggestive of the presence of inflammatory responses, inflammatory diseases in the gastrointestinal tract should be considered, abdominal CT should be performed, and imaging signs



that suggest the presence of gut inflammatory lesions should be carefully identified" (Reflected in page 40 line 2-14).

Reviewer's Comment: Page 40 Line 1: Grammar. Replace the word 'could' with 'can'.

We have replaced the word "could" with "can" (Reflected in page 40, line 7).

Reviewer #2:

Reviewer's Comment: It is good study about Bowel inflammatory presentations on computed tomography in patients with advanced aplastic anemia during flared inflammatory episodes. Computed tomography is helpful modality to evaluate Bowel inflammatory disease. Radiological imaging features and Imaging signs are good indicator to assess this disease.

We are highly grateful for the encouraging comment with our study.

## Round 2

Dear respected editors and reviewers

We have answered the comments as follows (manuscript No. 80895):

1 Specific Comments: All comments were responded satisfactorily except the comment "Page 7 Line 18-19: It is unclear why authors used conventional CT instead of CECT in all except one patients as CECT would be better to delineate gastrointestinal inflammatory pathology". Overall, it is an important study which highlights an important aspect in aplastic anemia care.

Conventional CT is first performed in clinical practice according to our hospital's workflow. If the imaging abnormalities are unable to be determined by conventional CT, especially in a situation when observation of the blood supply is required to discriminate lesions from non-tissue structures, performance of contrast-enhanced CT is required by the radiologists. In most circumstances, conventional CT is sufficient to determine the morphological changes, and contrast-enhanced CT is waived, with a purpose to reduce the radiation exposure.

The paragraph has been revised as:

“Conventional CT was performed for all patients in the search of the inflammatory niche during flared inflammatory episodes. If the conventional CT was sufficient to determine the radiological changes, contrast-enhanced CT was waived in order to reduce the radiation exposure. If the conventional CT was unable to determine the imaging abnormalities due to the difficulty in the discrimination of a massive lesion from contents in the intestinal lumen or due to the suspicion of a massive lesion being malignant, contrast-enhanced CT was performed. Meanwhile, endoscopic examination of the large intestine and ileocecal region was performed. Contrast-enhanced CT was performed in 1 patient in this study. Multiplanar reconstruction was performed for the assessment and expression of the radiological manifestations”.

2 Please provide a grant-application-form that contains the fund number consistent with your manuscript, or we will delete the part of “Supported by Specialized Scientific Research Fund Projects of The Medical Group of Qingdao University”.

We have submitted the grant.

3 The figures should be cited in order in the text (from figure 1 to 17).

We have marked the numbers of the figures in the order in accordance with the text.

4 We need to confirm whether the Figure 1 is original. If an author of a submission is re-using a figure or figures published elsewhere, or that is copyrighted, the author must provide documentation that the previous publisher or copyright holder has given permission for the figure to be re-published.

All figures were derived from the CT images of our treated patients. They are original and were not submitted elsewhere. The pictures were selected not long before we submitted the manuscript. If a published paper had pictures resembling ours, please give us the paper title and we will carefully compare the pictures with ours. We can also provide more images of this patients.

-----Please revise in the attached file "80895\_Auto\_edited" and reply within

seven days, thank you! Only one file is available in F6publishing system,  
please upload all files with zip format, or send to me by email