

Dear Dr. Wang

Thank you very much for your decision letter and advice on our manuscript (Manuscript NO: 85959) entitled “Brucellosis Presenting with Pancytopenia and Hearing Loss: A case report”. We also thank the reviewers for their constructive comments and suggestions. We have revised the manuscript accordingly, and all amendments are indicated by red font in the revised manuscript. In addition, our point-by-point responses to the comments are listed below this letter.

This revised manuscript has been edited and proofread by a professional medical editing company.

We hope that our revised manuscript is now acceptable for publication in your journal and look forward to hearing from you soon.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Xing Chen

First of all, we would like to express our sincere gratitude to the reviewers for their constructive and positive comments.

Replies to Reviewer 1

Specific Comments

1.The keywords should contain “case report”

Response: Thank you for your thoughtful advice. “case report” has been added as a keyword in the revised manuscript (Page 3, Last line).

2.The Introduction should be more extended.

Response: Thank you for your insightful suggestion. The introduction section has been extended in the revised manuscript (Page 5, lines 7-20).

3.Please provide more background information, state the purpose of the case report and its novelty

Response: According to our literature review, the reported case is very rare. We could only identify one similar case reported in the past. Study of these rare cases can improve clinicians' understanding of this disease. This point has been briefly mentioned in the abstract of the revised manuscript (Page 3, Lines 6-10).

4. Please add more details to the “history of present illness”: what were the features of dizziness? Does she experience true vertigo? What about hearing loss? Was it progressive? Did she suffer from tinnitus? What about headache?

Response: Thank you for your thoughtful advice. In the revised manuscript, we have described in detail the onset and progression of the disease and its accompanying symptoms (Page 5, last three lines; page 6, lines1-2).

5.Please explain the other results of the physical examination for neurobrucellosis signs, such as confusion, meningeal irritation signs papilledema

Response: Thank you for your insightful suggestion. We have added the findings of neurological and ear examination in the revised manuscript (page 6, lines 13-16).

6. Did you perform otoscopy? What was the result?

Response: We examined the patient's ear canal through the frontal mirror and the findings were as follows: bilateral auriculae were not malformed, the external ear canal was unobstructed, the tympanic membrane was intact, and the Politzer cone was normal. Therefore, we did not use an otoscope for further examination.

7. Did you perform lumbar puncture?

Response: Yes, we performed a lumbar puncture, and the CSF findings were normal. We have provided the detailed findings in the revised manuscript (page 6, last six lines).

8. The Discussion: what do you mean by “double degree hearing loss”?

Response: Thanks for pointing out this incorrect expression. Correction has been made in the revised manuscript (Page 8, Line 30).

9. What were the limitations of your study?

Response: The limitations of our study were that we did not meticulously obtain the patient's epidemiological history at admission. The head magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) examination could have been evaluated in more detail. Further, we did not perform tiger red plate agglutination test (RBPT) and standard test tube agglutination test (SAT) on CSF specimen. For hearing loss, we should also have performed otoscopy. We have acknowledged these limitations in the revised manuscript. (Page 9, Lines 23-28).

10. In reference 19, it is not necessary to list the names of all the authors

Response: Correction has been made in the revised manuscript (Page 13, Lines 12-15).

11. There are a few spelling and grammatical errors, such as “Acknowledgements”

Response: Correction has been made in the revised manuscript (Page 10, line 8).

Replies to Reviewer 2

Specific Comments

The manuscript is original. It helps better understanding of brucella infection complications. The findings are unique and used methodology is appropriate. The case is unique and rare, it could serve as a good example to detect undiagnosed cases of brucellosis. It is a case study which describes only one case. It will be worthy to look for other atypical cases.

Response: Thanks for your positive comment regarding this manuscript.