



**U.O.C. Malattie Infettive e Tropicali  
Direttore: Prof. Carlo Torti**

Catanzaro, January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2021

Dear Editor,

thank you for your interest in our paper. Please find attached the revised version of our article **“Histopathology and immunophenotyping of late onset cutaneous manifestations of COVID-19 in elderly patients: a case series”**.

All the criticisms raised by the Referees have been addressed and some comments/observations were used to improve quality of our work. So, we hope that our work is now suitable for publication in your esteemed Journal.

Our responses to the comments made by the Reviewers are attached to this letter. Responses to the Reviewers' comments include changes made in the final manuscript.

Yours sincerely,

Maria Mazzitelli, MD

Reviewer #1:

**Scientific Quality:** Grade C (Good)

**Language Quality:** Grade B (Minor language polishing)

**Conclusion:** Major revision

**Specific Comments to Authors:** Numerous reports have showed that cutaneous signs are one of the significant clinical manifestations of COVID-19, and may be the only manifestation of COVID-19 in some cases. This manuscript mainly described histopathological and immunophenotypic characteristics of dermatological lesions in three elderly patients with COVID-19, which could improve our understanding of cutaneous manifestations and pathophysiology of COVID-19. However, below some revisions are needed before being published in World Journal of Clinical Cases.

1. According to the journal's requirements, under the heading of Case Presentation, the following aspects must be presented in this order: 1) Chief complaints; 2) History of present illness; 3) History of past illness; 4) Personal and family history; 5) Physical examination upon admission; and 6) Laboratory examinations. Additionally, the heading of "FINAL DIAGNOSIS", "TREATMENT", and "OUTCOME AND FOLLOW-UP" should also be added.

*Thank you for this comment, the paper is now structured accordingly.*

2. In page 5, the description of figure results is not consistent with its label. For example, an erythematous and itchy skin rash of the sub-mammary region appeared in Figure 1, 3A, not Figure 1, 1A-1B. It is suggested that images may be marked in A-E order in Figure 1. Additionally, in Figure 3 all images of CD3 staining should be adjacent, and so are CD4 staining and CD8 staining. In Figure 3, images may be marked in A-R order, J and K should not be deleted. In figure legends, all abbreviations should be given in full text according to the journal's requirements.

*You are right, the figures are now named and marked as appropriate and their description is consistent along the text.*

3. In all references, all authors should be provided. In reference 1, "The Lancet Infectious Diseases. 2020." should be changed to "Lancet Infect Dis 2021;" and volume and page numbers are 21: 24-25? In reference 3, "Journal of the European Academy of Dermatology and Venereology: JEADV. 2020." should be changed to "J Eur Acad Dermatol Venereol. 2020; 34: e212-e213 [PMID: 32215952 DOI: 10.1111/jdv.16387]". In reference 14, "Travel Med and Infect Dis. 2020. [https:// doi: 10.1016/j.tmaid.2020.101826](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tmaid.2020.101826)." should be changed to "Travel Med Infect Dis 2020; 37: 101826 [PMID: 32739472 DOI: 10.1016/j.tmaid.2020.101826]". In reference 18, "In: Indian Journal of Dermatology. 2017. [https:// doi: 10.4103/ijd.IJD\\_34\\_17](https://doi.org/10.4103/ijd.IJD_34_17)." should be changed to "Indian J Dermatol 2017; 62: 158-167 [PMID: 28400635 DOI: 10.4103/ijd.IJD\_34\_17]". In reference 19, "Chinese J Pathol. 2020. [https:// doi: 10.3760/cma.j.cn112151-20200312-00193](https://doi.org/10.3760/cma.j.cn112151-20200312-00193)." should be changed to "Chin J Pathol. 2020; 49: 411-417 [PMID: 32172546 DOI: 10.3760/cma.j.cn112151-20200312-00193]". Please check other references including content and format carefully according to the journal's requirements.

*All the references were amended, according to the journal's requirements.*

4. In page 6, line174, "...be confirmed and studied in larger studies" should be changed to "...be confirmed in larger studies". In page 6, line186, "...remains to be clarified" should be changed to "...remains to be clarified". In page 8, line203, "Figure 1. Clinical manifestations of COVID-19 in our patients" should be changed to "Figure 1 Cutaneous manifestations in COVID-19 patients". Throughout the text, please correct the syntax, tense and grammatical errors carefully. Other suggestions have been listed in the uploaded revised version.

*All these points were cleared along the text.*

#### **4 LANGUAGE QUALITY**

Please resolve all language issues in the manuscript based on the peer review report. Please be sure to have a native-English speaker edit the manuscript for grammar, sentence structure, word usage, spelling, capitalization, punctuation, format, and general readability, so that the manuscript's language will meet our direct publishing needs.

*The paper is written with the help of Dr Branca Isabel Pereira, who is based in the UK and who took care of language revision.*

#### **5 EDITORIAL OFFICE'S COMMENTS**

Authors must revise the manuscript according to the Editorial Office's comments and suggestions, which are listed below:

##### **(1) Science editor:**

1 Scientific quality: The manuscript describes a case report of the histopathology and immunophenotyping of late onset cutaneous manifestations of COVID-19 in elderly patients. The topic is within the scope of the WJCC. (1) Classification: Grade C; (2) Summary of the Peer-Review Report: The manuscript mainly described histopathological and immunophenotypic characteristics of dermatological lesions in three elderly patients with COVID-19. However, some revisions are needed. The questions raised by the reviewer should be answered; and (3) Format: There are 3 figures. (4) References: A total of 20 references are cited, including 16 references published in the last 3 years; (5) Self-cited references: There are 2 self-cited references. The self-referencing rates should be less than 10%. Please keep the reasonable self-citations that are closely related to the topic of the manuscript, and remove other improper self-citations. If the authors fail to address the critical issue of self-citation, the editing process of this manuscript will be terminated; and (6) References recommend: The authors have the right to refuse to cite improper references recommended by peer reviewer(s), especially the references published by the peer reviewer(s) themselves. If the authors found the peer reviewer(s) request the authors to cite improper references published by themselves, please send the peer reviewer's ID number to the [editorialoffice@wjgnet.com](mailto:editorialoffice@wjgnet.com). The Editorial Office will close and remove the peer reviewer from the F6Publishing system immediately. 2 Language evaluation: Classification: Grade B. 3 Academic norms and rules: The authors should provide the CARE Checklist–2016 and Written informed consent. No academic misconduct was found in the Bing search. 4 Supplementary comments: This is an unsolicited manuscript. No financial support was obtained for the study. The topic has not previously been published in the WJCC. 5

*The self-citation rate was reduced, according to the journal's standards.*

Issues raised:

- (1) The authors did not provide original pictures. Please provide the original figure documents. Please prepare and arrange the figures using PowerPoint to ensure that all graphs or arrows or text portions can be reprocessed by the editor;

*Original pictures are now available.*

- (2) PMID and DOI numbers are missing in the reference list. Please provide the PubMed numbers and DOI citation numbers to the reference list and list all authors of the references.

*DOI numbers and citations are now available*

- (3) The “Case Presentation” section was not written according to the Guidelines for Manuscript Preparation. Please re-write the “Case Presentation” section, and add the “FINAL DIAGNOSIS”, “TREATMENT”, and “OUTCOME AND FOLLOW-UP” sections to the main text, according to the Guidelines and Requirements for Manuscript Revision. 6  
Recommendation: Conditional acceptance.

*All the sections are now written accordingly to the journal's requirements.*