Letter to the Editor

Vascular Anomalies and Inflammatory Bowel Disease

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In our letter we presented a case following a similar case report in this journal1 where a patient with ulcerative colitis [UC] had the same vascular malformation, but located in the small bowel. The same nomenclature was also used in the first report and the term in question, ‘cavernous haemangioma’, is also used by Wang et al. in the conclusion of their letter in relation to our report.

Recently the International Society for the Study of Vascular Anomalies [ISSVA] classification has been adopted.2 This combines many aspects of the previous classification systems. The term ‘cavernous haemangioma’ has been dropped, but the complexity of the classification systems has resulted in persistent use of this term even in current scholarly articles.3,4 In our opinion, in view of the limited literature about such cases, the immediate change in nomenclature, especially for non-vascular specialists, may prevent their actual reporting. Thus, this may impede us from concluding that an actual association may truly exist.

The diagnosis of Blue Rubber Bleb Naevus Syndrome [BRBNS] is based on the presence of characteristic cutaneous lesions with or without gastrointestinal bleeding and/or the involvement of other organs.5 We do not think that our patient has BRBNS, simply because this was the only apparent vascular malformation that was present within the gastrointestinal tract and no cutaneous lesions were present.

Furthermore, the diagnosis of UC was confirmed histologically. The patient was in all probability bleeding from the vascular malformation as she had persistent bleeding even while she was on medications for UC, and in the presence of both endoscopic and histologically confirmed mucosal healing. Lately the patient of her own accord decided to stop all her medications. A repeat colonoscopy while off medications demonstrated macroscopic and microscopic inflammation, thus further confirming the diagnosis of UC.

Conflict of Interest
None.

References