Whole-body MR and cysticercosis: reply to Wiwanitkit

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We thank Dr. Wiwanitkit for interest expressed in our article [1].

Whole-body MR (WB-MR) is a recent development that refers to simultaneous whole-body coverage by acquiring multiple overlapping stations with the use of parallel acquisition technique (PAT) [2]. It is not the same as separate and non-contiguous conventional scanning of different body regions, which Dr. Wiwanitkit seems to have inferred. This distinction has been adequately emphasized in the article [1] and in the literature [2]. To the best of our knowledge, use of whole-body MR in the diagnosis of a disseminated parasitic disease has not been previously reported and hence, in our opinion, it is unique in the given scenario.

Hydatid cysts have been described in multiple locations besides liver. The unusual locations include lung, kidney, bone, brain, heart, spleen, pancreas, muscle, adrenal, ovary and peritoneum [3, 4]. The imaging appearances of hydatid disease are distinctly different from cysticercosis, with the hydatid disease primarily consisting of large cysts (size usually of few centimeters to more than 15 cm) that do not show any enhancement except for a thin rim of enhancement in few cases. Even when there is disseminated hydatid disease, the cysts are usually of large size and contain multiple small daughter cysts [5]. The muscle hydatids are extremely rare and have been reported as single or few conglomerate cysts, typically in one location [3–5]. In contrast, cysticercus cysts

are typically very small, usually only a few millimeters. The cysticerci primarily occur in the brain or muscles. They are extremely unusual in liver and other solid abdominal organs, which are the usual sites of hydatid involvement. Such extensive involvement of the muscles of the whole body with involvement of practically every muscle fibre as seen in our case has been described in literature in disseminated cysticerci (but not by whole-body MRI) and has not been described in hydatid disease. In our patient, the differential of hydatid disease of disseminated cysticercosis is therefore inconceivable.

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