

## Reviewer's report

**Title:** Lessons from arsenic poisoning of infants due to contaminated dried milk: A review

**Version:** 1 **Date:** 23 August 2006

**Reviewer:** David Bellinger

### Reviewer's report:

General

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

1. p.4: What led Dr. Hamamoto to focus solely on the Morinaga dried milk product?

2. p.5: What is "MF-marked dried milk"—this should be defined upon its first usage.

3. p. 8: I think the statement, "...the clinical researchers...were not skilled in epidemiology" should be deleted. The pertinent observation is that the researchers did not carry out sound epidemiological studies. I don't think such an evaluative comment on the researchers' skills is warranted.

4. p.8: I am not clear on why reference is made to the Minamata poisoning episode. It seems that the authors are making a general point about the absence of epidemiologic skills in Japan.

5. p.13: It is perhaps too strong to say that the previous reports on the Morinaga episode have been "ignored by scientists abroad and by international agencies" and that the world "turned the blind eye." This implies an active process when it might be that the reports simply did not attract the attention for one reason or another, e.g., where and when they were published.

**What next?:** Accept after minor essential revisions

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.