

## Treatment of duodenal ulceration with Furazolidone in China preceded the discovery of its association with *H pylori*

Frank Ivor Tovey

Frank Ivor Tovey, Honorary Research Fellow, Department of Surgery, University College London, London, United Kingdom  
Correspondence to: Frank Ivor Tovey, OBE, ChM, FRCS, Honorary Research Fellow, Department of Surgery, University College London, London, United Kingdom. frank@tovey.fsnet.co.uk  
Telephone: +44-1256-461521 Fax: +44-1256-461521  
Received: 2007-05-20 Accepted: 2007-05-21

© 2007 The WJG Press. All rights reserved.

Tovey FI. Treatment of duodenal ulceration with Furazolidone in China preceded the discovery of its association with *H pylori*. *World J Gastroenterol* 2007; 13(22): 3147

<http://www.wjgnet.com/1007-9327/13/3147.asp>

### TO THE EDITOR

It is not generally known that patients with duodenal ulceration were being treated with an antibiotic, Furazolidone, in China five or more years before Marshall and Warren<sup>[1]</sup> published their seminal paper in 1984 about the association between duodenal ulceration and Campylobacter like organisms in the stomach, later named *H pylori*. Marshall and Warren won the 2005 Nobel Prize in physiology or medicine for their work on how a bacterium can relate to gastric inflammation or peptic ulceration.

In 1981 I was invited by the Bureau of Health to a lecture/research tour of rice-growing areas of China in connection with research into the geographical prevalence of duodenal ulceration in relationship to staple diets. During that visit I met Professor Zhi-Tian Zheng at the

Third Teaching Hospital in Beijing, and he told me about a series of duodenal ulcer patients, 80% of whose ulcers had healed, and had remained healed for 3 years, following a 2 wk course of treatment with Furazolidone. At the time I was very sceptical about this.

I was invited back to China in 1984, this time to make a tour of the wheat and millet-growing areas, and once again I visited Professor Zhi-Tian Zheng in Beijing. By then he had gathered a much larger number of patients whose duodenal ulcers had healed following treatment with Furazolidone, and who were remaining in remission. I persuaded him to publish this, and a letter from him and his colleagues appeared in *The Lancet* in 1985<sup>[2]</sup>.

Later in this tour I found that Professor Huai-Yu Zhao in Lanzhou had similar findings which he and his colleagues also reported later in the same year in a letter to *The Lancet*<sup>[3]</sup>.

It seems only right that Professors Zhi-Tian Zheng and Huai-Yu Zhao and their colleagues in China should have some of the credit for having linked persistence and recurrence of duodenal ulceration with a bacterial infection.

### REFERENCES

- 1 **Marshall BJ**, Warren JR. Unidentified curved bacilli in the stomach of patients with gastritis and peptic ulceration. *Lancet* 1984; **1**: 1311-1315
- 2 **Zheng ZT**, Wang ZY, Chu YX, Li YN, Li QF, Lin SR, Xu ZM. Double-blind short-term trial of furazolidone in peptic ulcer. *Lancet* 1985; **1**: 1048-1049
- 3 **Zhao HY**, Li GZ, Guo JD, Yan Z, Sun SW, Li LS, Duan YM, Yue FZ. Furazolidone in peptic ulcer. *Lancet* 1985; **2**: 276-277

S- Editor Liu Y E- Editor Wang HF