

Typhoid osteomyelitis of the spine is not “extremely rare”

To the Editor—I read with interest the article “Typhoid osteomyelitis of the lumbar spine” in the *Hong Kong Medical Journal* October 2006 issue.¹

I would like to draw the authors’ attention to the fact that though typhoid osteomyelitis of the spine is undoubtedly an uncommon condition, it is perhaps not as “extremely rare” as they believe it to be when they state that “only four cases have been reported in the literature”. We draw their attention to an article by Santos and Sapico² who reviewed 44 cases and reported two of their own cases of this condition. I also would like to draw their attention to eight cases reported by Chang,³ and case reports by Gupta et al,⁴ Acharya and Bhatnagar,⁵ Tsui et al,⁶ and D’Souza et al.⁷ Furthermore, in their discussion they say that “all reported cases of typhoid

osteomyelitis...did not involve immunocompromised patients”. Again I assume that they mean typhoid vertebral osteomyelitis, which is also perhaps inaccurate as Santos and Sapico² reviewed six patients with Sickle cell disease and five with diabetes mellitus. Conditions like these are known to compromise the immunity of patients.³

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