



British Liver Transplant Group

**Warwick Arts Centre, 19-20 September 2017**

**King's College Hospital case**

**F 31 y/o**

**First transplant 1997 for AIH**

**Retransplantation in 2011 (+14y) for graft failure**

**+6d (2011): Bleeding, biopsy at laparotomy**

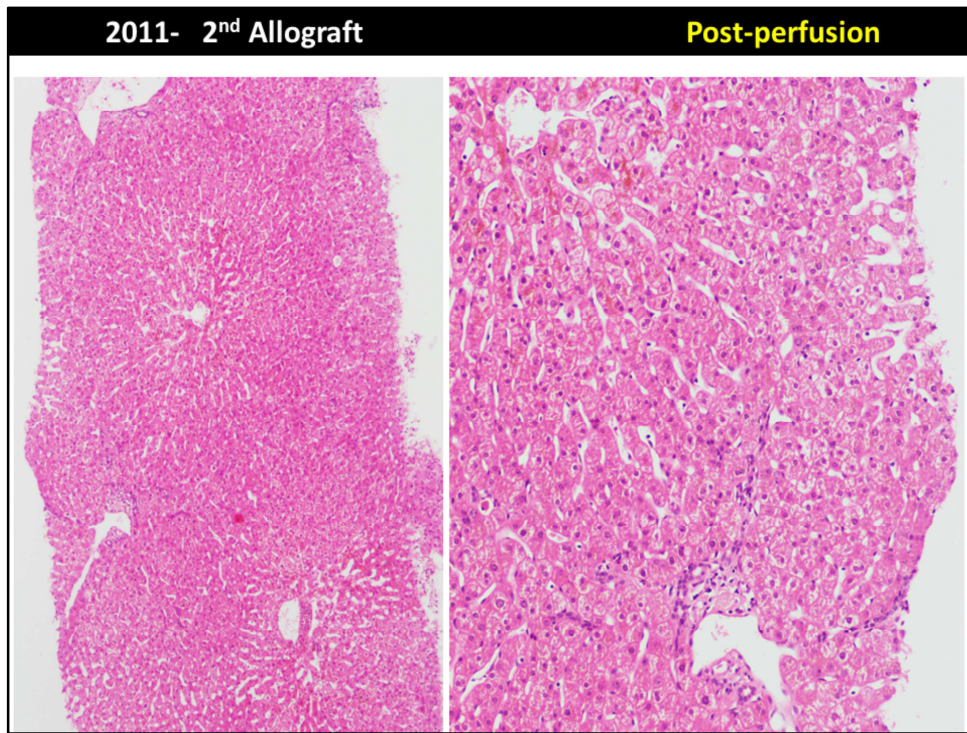
**Liver biopsy in 2017**

**+5y2m (2017): worsening graft dysfunction**

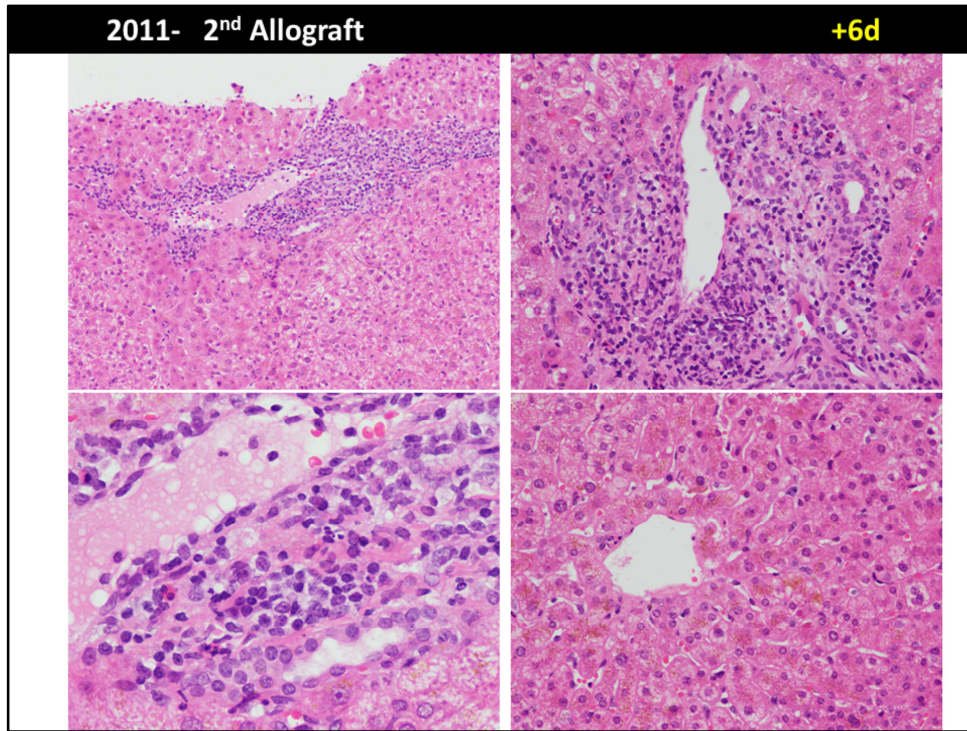
Good afternoon

This case is from a young lady, first transplanted in 97 for AIH, who was retransplanted for progressive graft failure 14 y after.

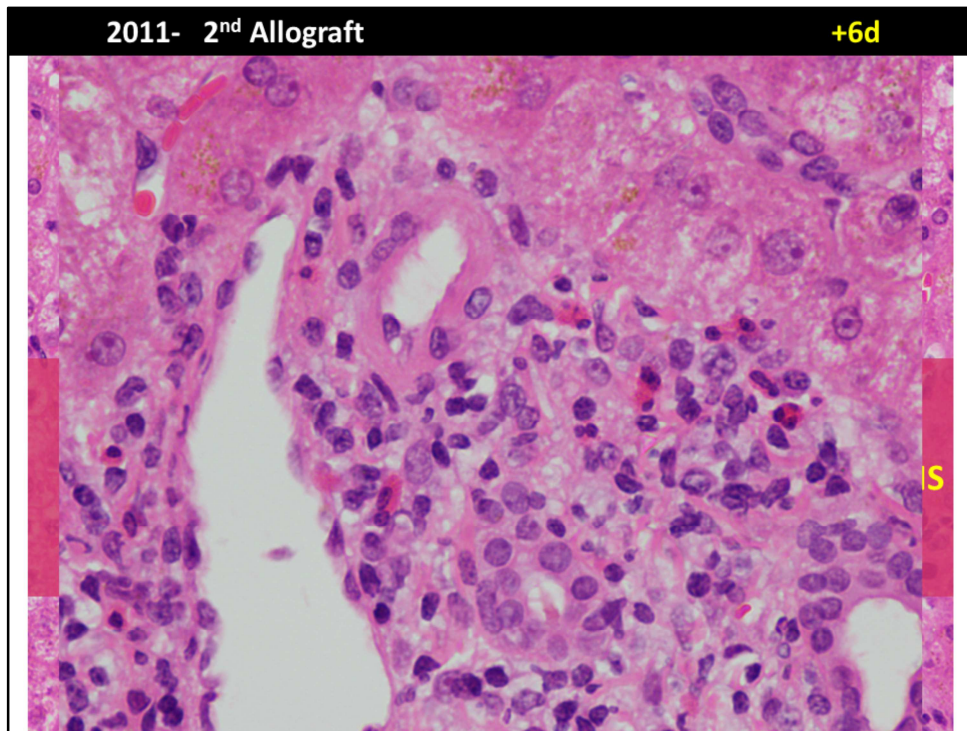
The only significant posttx event was an episode of bleeding for which a laparotomy was performed and a biopsy taken. After that she did not have clinically relevant findings until this year, when the biopsy I'm going to present was taken.



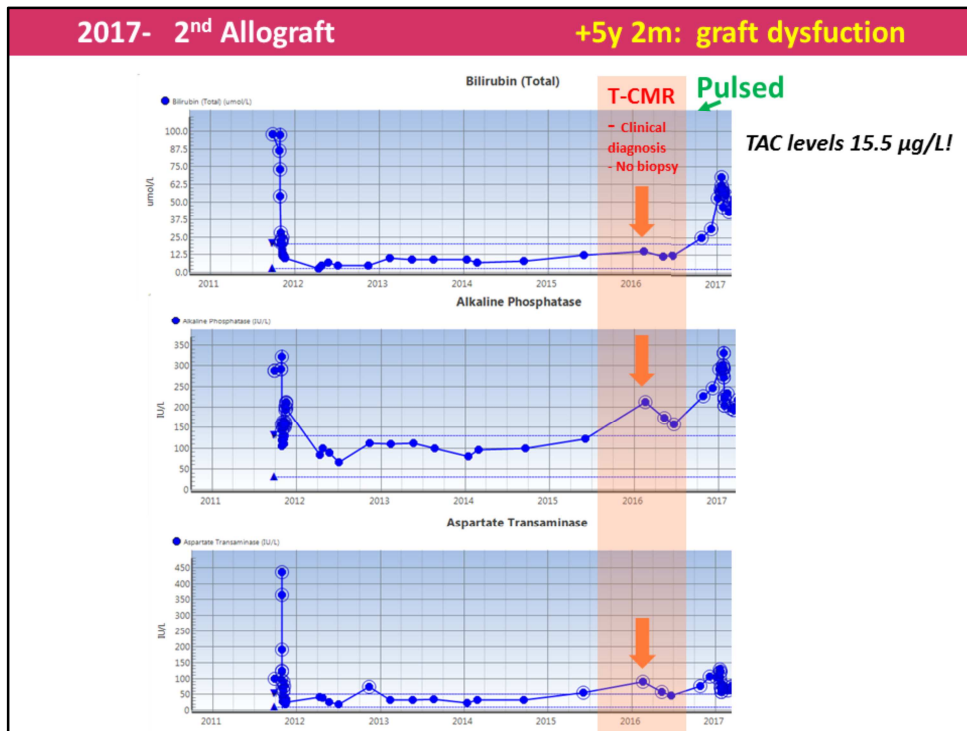
Just for completion a picture of the post-PF, with preserved vascular architecture and no abnormal histological findings



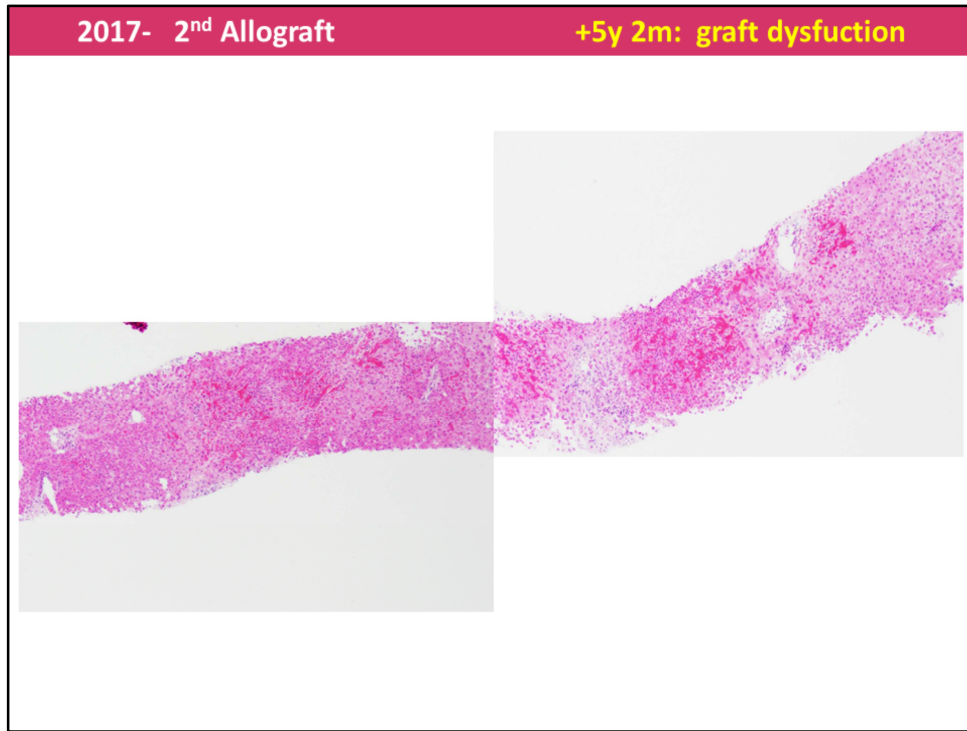
The biopsy taken during the laparotomy for bleeding showed diffuse inflammatory portal enlargement, by mixed infamma infiltrate including eosinophils, small and large lymphs and occasional plasma cells. Bile duct damage was seen but minimal, non-destructive. Portal vein endotheliitis was significant and CL areas and CV did not show PV or endotheliitis or hepatocellular changes (no features of ischaemia)



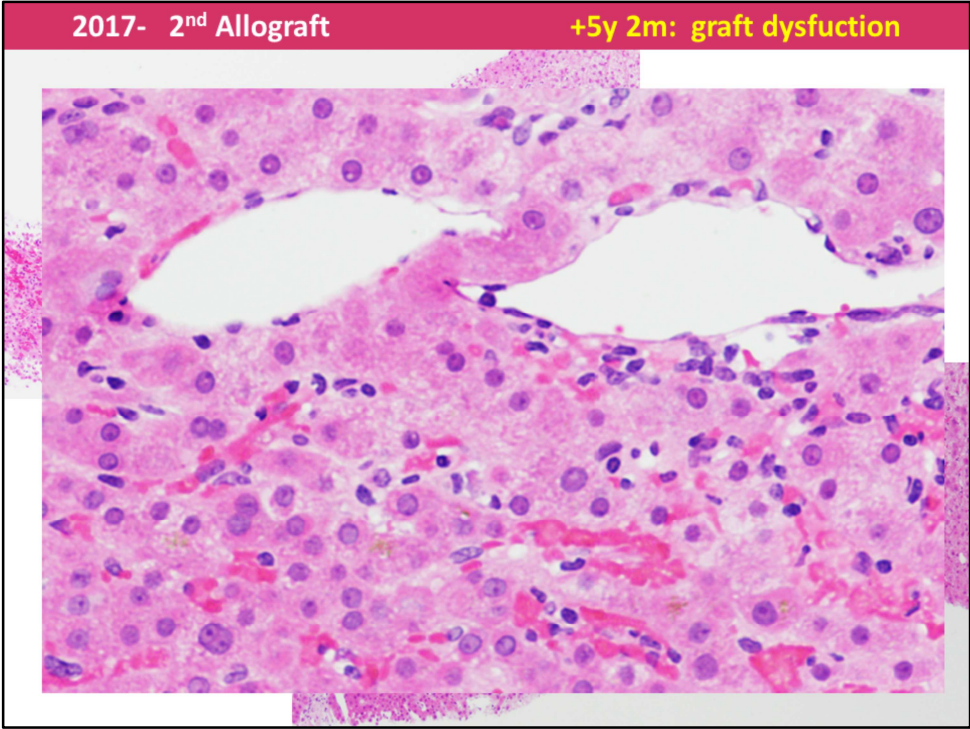
With these findings the diagnosis was moderate ACR, that was treated with intensification of the baseline IS and followed by improvement of the LFTs.



From that episode the clinical course was unremarkable as you can observe in these graphics from the end of 2011 after the retransplantation until 2017. In 2016, an increase in the cholestatic and transaminase enzymes was detected, clinically interpreted as ACR and the patient pulsed with steroids, without a liver biopsy. Just a comment on the presence of high levels of TAC at that point. From that time there was a progressive increase of the cholestatic enzymes, transaminases and bilirubin, and our current biopsy was taken



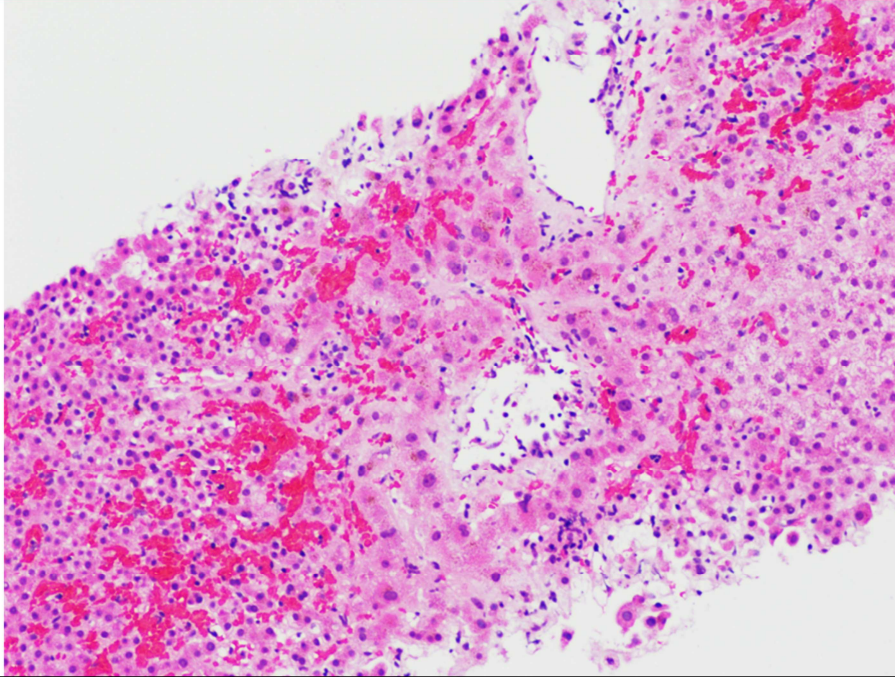
At low magnification the biopsy showed heterogeneous staining, with these red congestive areas



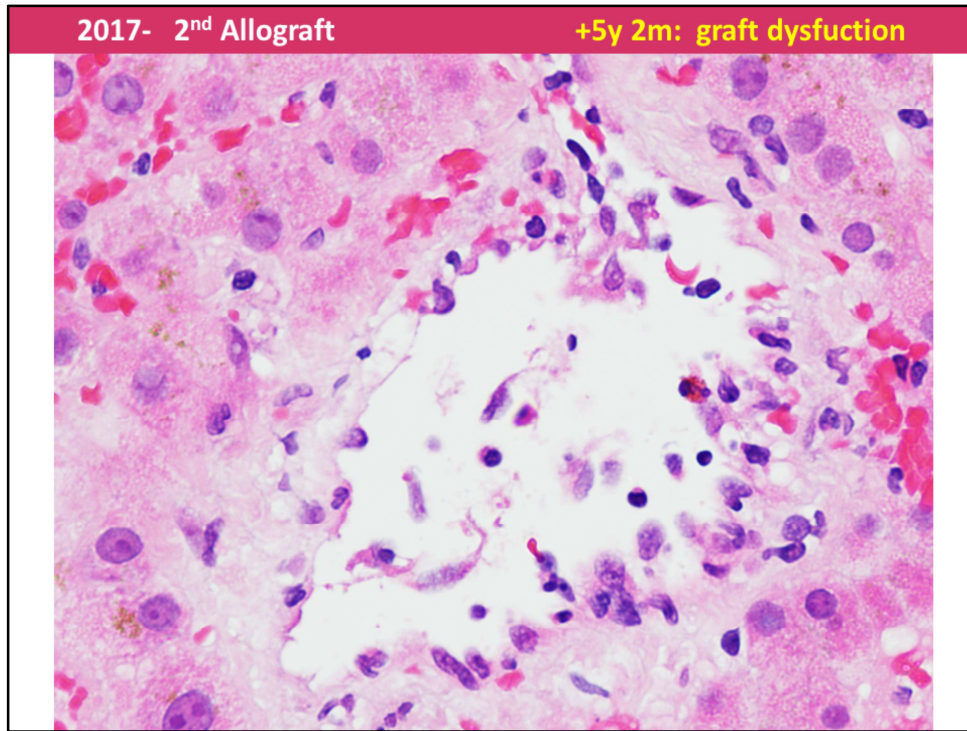
As well as zones of portal inflammation

2017- 2<sup>nd</sup> Allograft

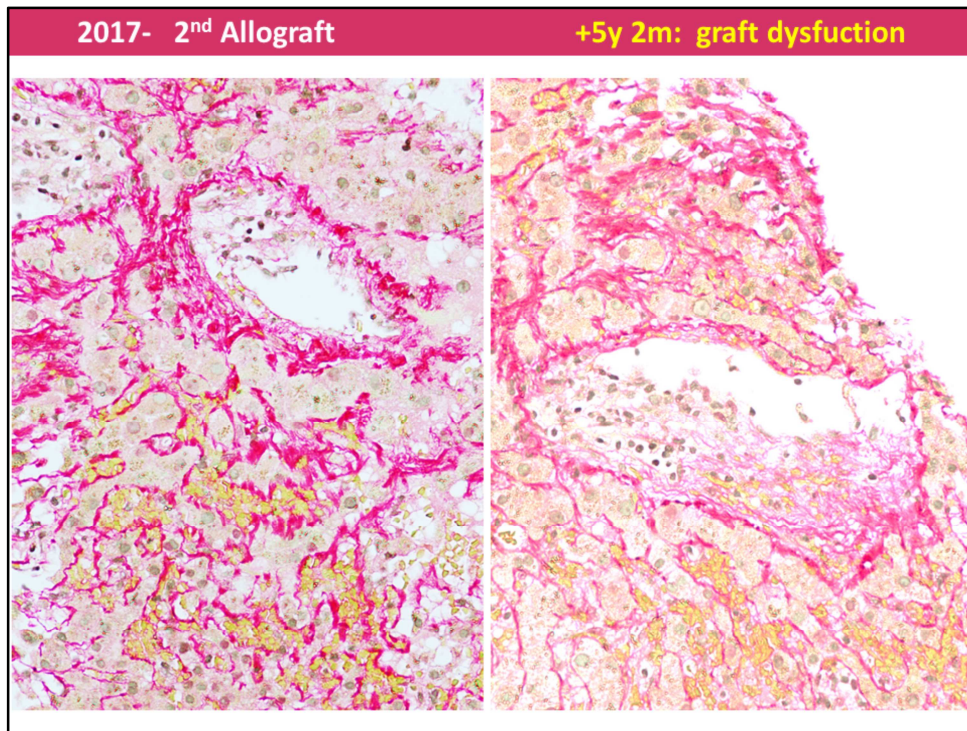
+5y 2m: graft dysfunction



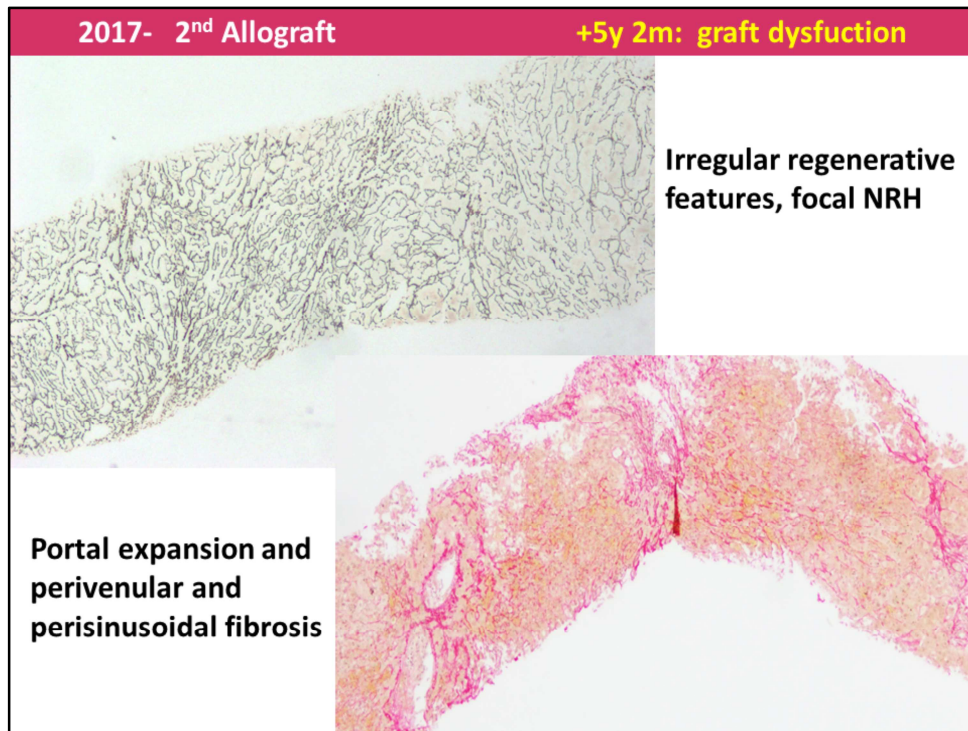
The most remarkable changes were at the centrilobular and midlobular areas, with presence of brisk sinusoidal congestion, liver plates atrophy, and presence of endothelial damage in most CVs, with prominent endothelia and endothelitis



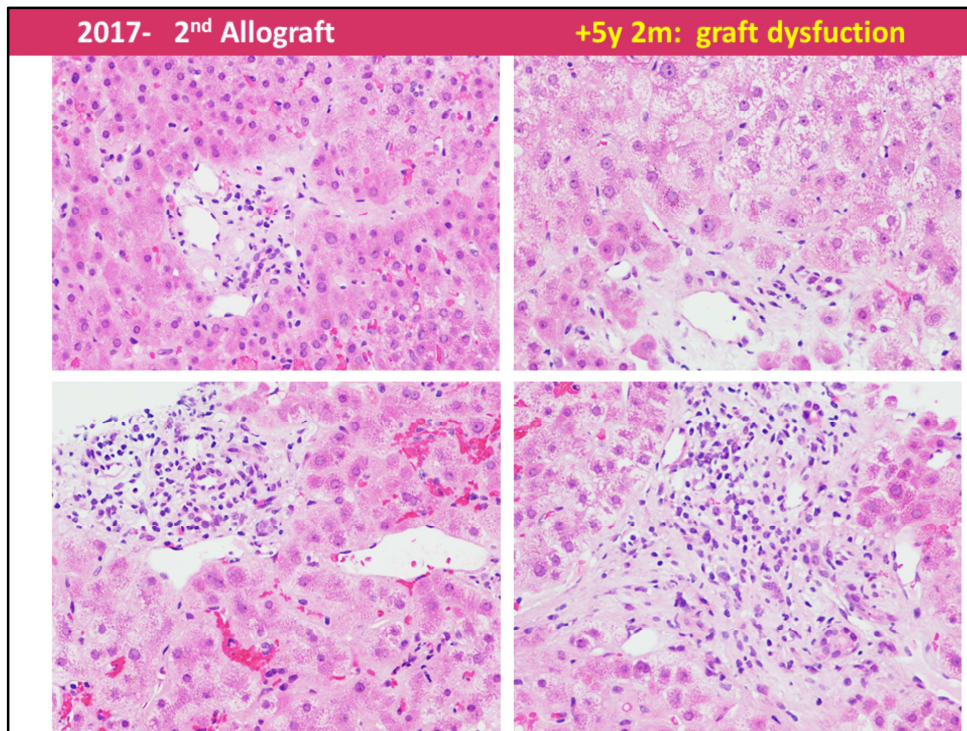
As you can see in more detail, with presence of occasional eosinophils in that infiltrate



Sirius red for collagen fibres demonstrates irregular fibrous thickening of the CV wall, with focal early loose fibro-obliterative lesions  
And prominent perisinusoidal fibrosis



The architecture was clearly abnormal, with reticulin stain showing irregular regenerative changes (focal NRH)  
Portal tracts were also expanded

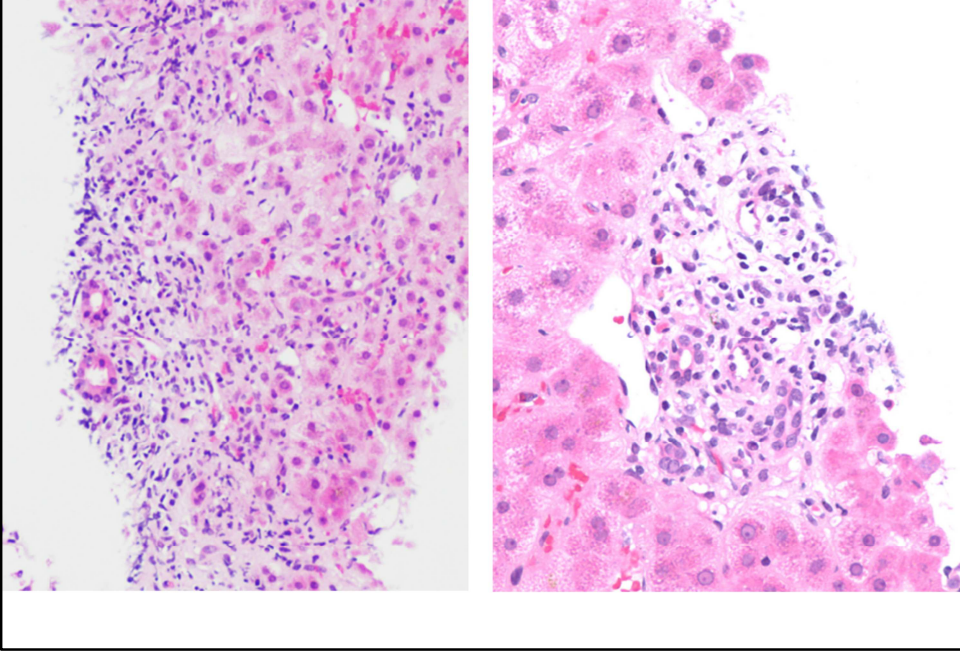


Portal inflammation was variable, with occasional portal tracts with minimal changes, but most of them showed an overall mild inflammatory component with lymphs and occasional plasma cells. As you can see in the images bile ducts were preserved, with minimal epithelial damage, and ductular reaction was not a feature. Interface hepatitis is not significant if any.

Of note are also the abnormal portal microvasculature, with absence or attenuation of most portal vein branches and the identification of these small paraportal thin-walled structures, dilated, features similar to those found in biopsies with portal hypertension.

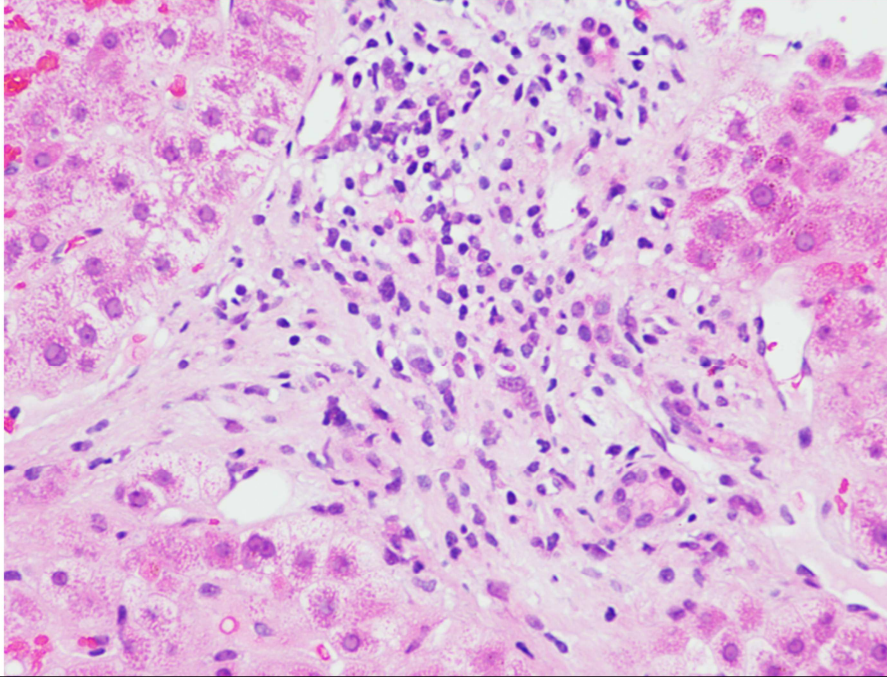
2017- 2<sup>nd</sup> Allograft

+5y 2m: graft dysfunction



2017- 2<sup>nd</sup> Allograft

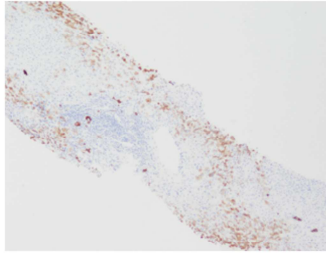
+5y 2m: graft dysfunction



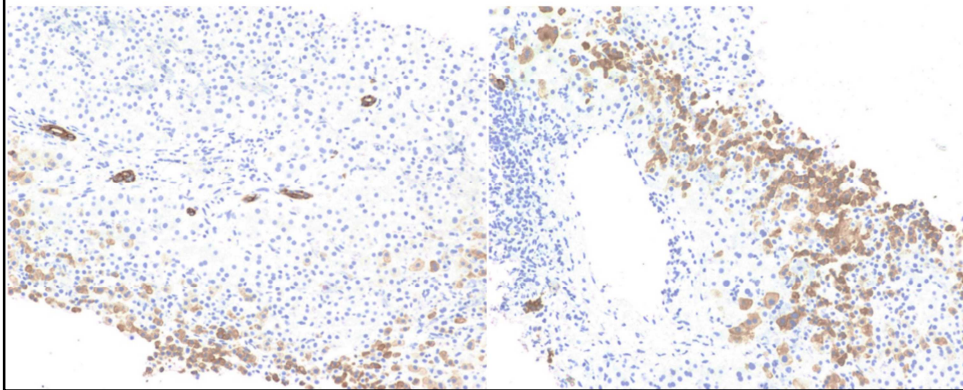
No capillaritis

2017- 2<sup>nd</sup> Allograft

+5y 2m: graft dysfunction



Cytokeratin 7 aberrant expression

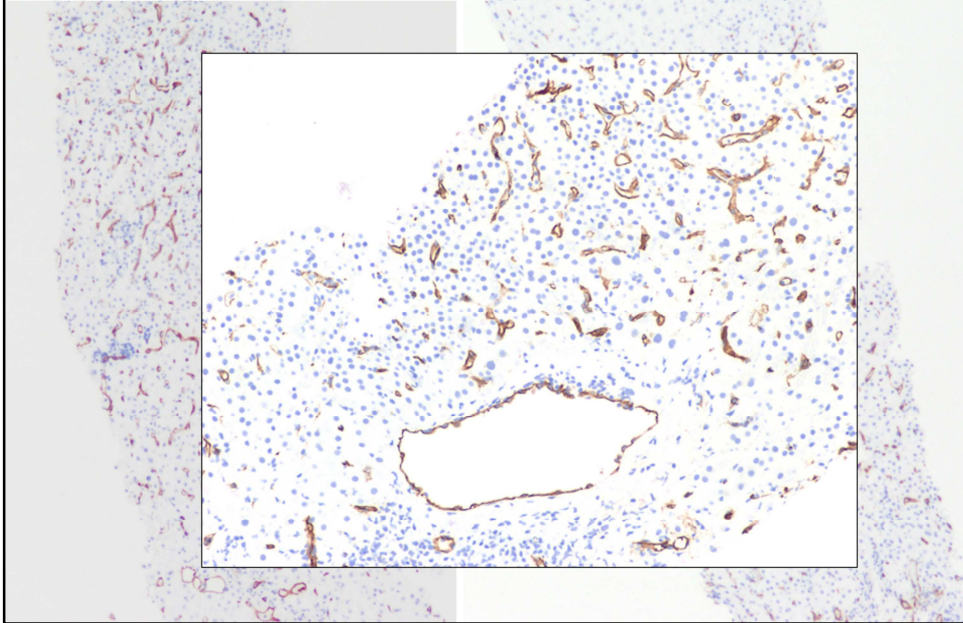


No capillaritis

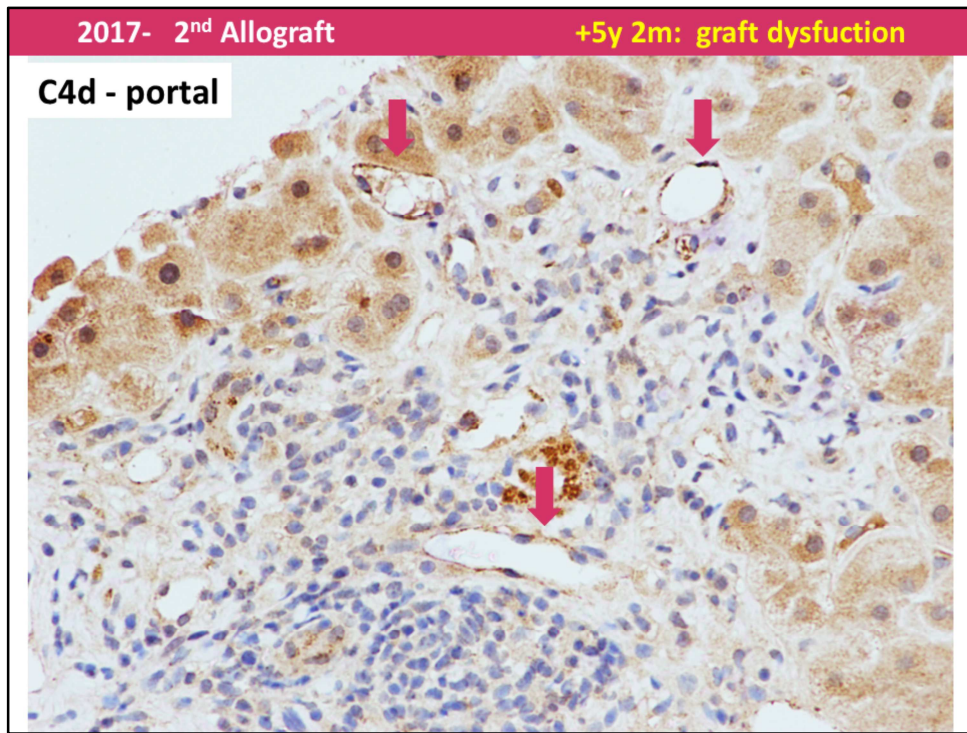
2017- 2<sup>nd</sup> Allograft

+5y 2m: graft dysfunction

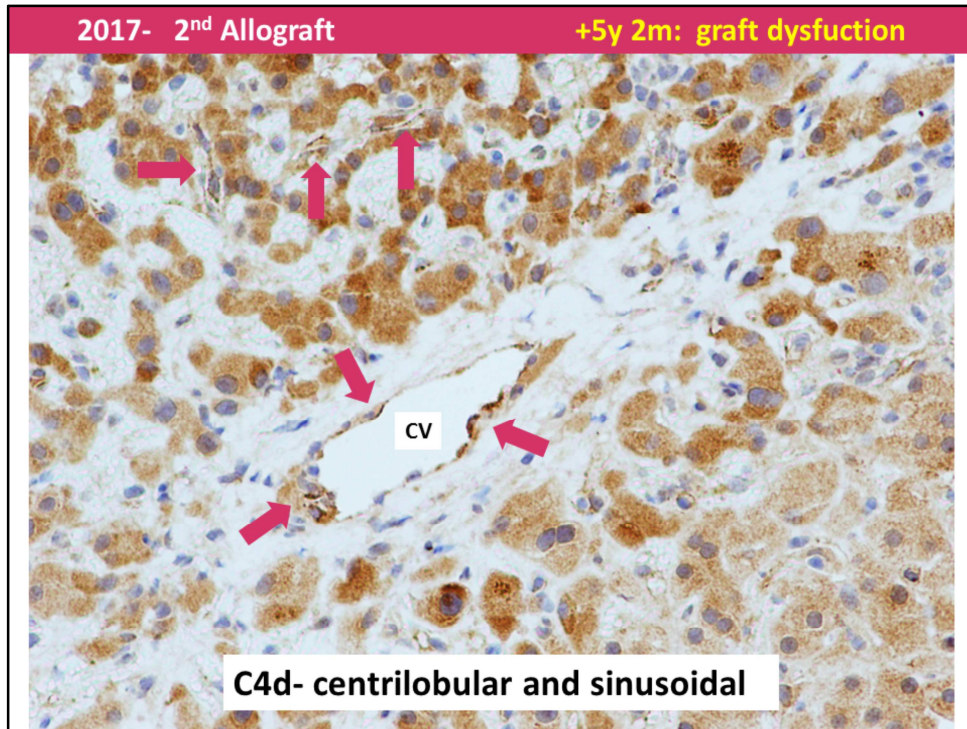
**CD34 – Diffuse capillarization**



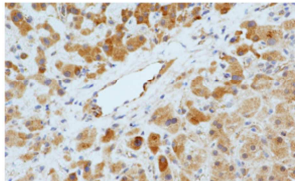
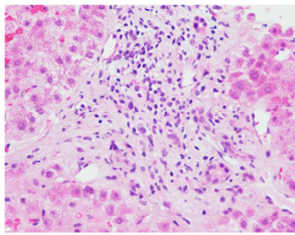
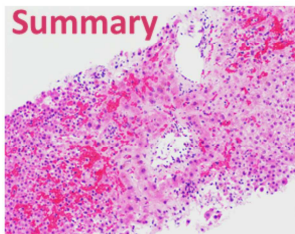
CD34 is in keeping with the abnormal hepatic vascularization (arterialization) with extensive diffuse pattern



And finally C4d staining, (technically not the best, with strong background, but confident endothelial stain) that was positive at the portal areas



And sinusoids and CV endothelia



#### Marked vascular damage:

- Central hepatic vein endothelitis
- Sinusoidal dilatation, congestion, early veno-occlusive lesions (SOS-like)
- Capillarization, perisinusoidal fibrosis and irregular RH
- Portal vascular abnormalities – attenuation and small periportal vessels

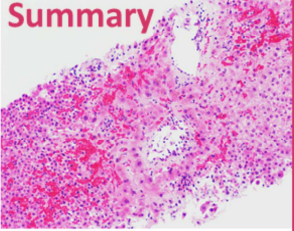
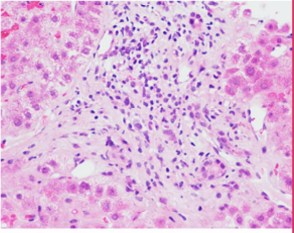
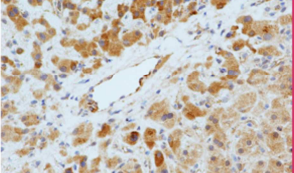
#### Patchy portal inflammation ('chronic hepatitis type of injury') with focal mild interface activity, mild bile duct lesions and minimal PV endothelitis

Occasional plasma cell component present

#### C4d+

So in summary we have a chronic allograft damage with two main features: marked patchy vascular lesions and portal inflammation.

The vascular damage involves all the vascular compartments of the liver, sinusoids, CVs and PVs, in different degree and features. SOS like features are present, with sinusoidal dilatation, acute congestion and veno-occlusive lesions.

<p><b>Summary</b></p> 	<p><b>SOS/VOD?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Potential <b>DILI</b> (high TAC levels)</li> <li>- The coexistence of endothelitis makes mechanical venous outflow obstruction less likely but has to be excluded</li> <li>- Prothrombotic conditions?</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Late rejection?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The patient was on high TAC levels</li> <li>- Real CV endotheliitis</li> </ul>
	<p><b>AMR?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 'Chronic hepatitis type injury'- Exclusion of other causes required</li> <li>- Endothelia targeted (sinusoidal, central hepatic veins and portal veins)</li> <li>- C4d positivity</li> </ul> <p><b>.....mixed?</b></p>

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Meeting Report

**2016 Comprehensive Update of the Banff Working Group on Liver Allograft Pathology: Introduction of Antibody-Mediated Rejection**

A. J. Demetris, C. Bellamy, S. G. Hübscher et al.

**Table 7:** Criteria for chronic active liver allograft AMR

Probable chronic active AMR (all four criteria are required):

(1) Histopathological pattern of injury consistent with chronic AMR: both required:

(a) Otherwise unexplained and at least mild mononuclear portal and/or perivenular inflammation with interface and/or perivenular necro-inflammatory activity (Figures 4 and 5).<sup>1</sup>

(b) At least moderate portal/periportal, sinusoidal and/or perivenular fibrosis.<sup>2</sup>

(2) Recent (for example, measured within 3 months of biopsy) circulating HLA DSA in serum samples;

(3) At least focal C4d-positive (>10% portal tract microvascular endothelia) (Figure 5).

(4) Reasonable exclusion of other insults that might cause a similar pattern of injury (see text).

Possible chronic active AMR:

(1) As above, but C4d staining is minimal or absent

ADCC, antibody-dependent cellular cytotoxicity; AMR, antibody-mediated rejection; DSA, donor-specific antibodies; HLA, human leukocyte antigen; TCMR, T cell-mediated rejection.

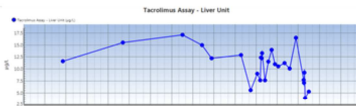
<sup>1</sup>It is difficult, at this time, to determine whether the mononuclear infiltrates are related to AMR (e.g. ADCC with capillaritis) or TCMR (mostly T effectors cells) or mixed AMR and TCMR. More research is needed on this topic.

<sup>2</sup>CD34 and SMA stains might be considered to study sinusoidal capillarization and stellate cell activation.

With all these findings features are highly suggestive of cAMR

## Additional clinical information

- **Imaging studies:**  
No vascular compromise  
Negative
- **Serology and procoagulant status:**  
Negative
- **Other:**  
Tacrolimus  
15.5 µg/L



← Control

### Treatment:

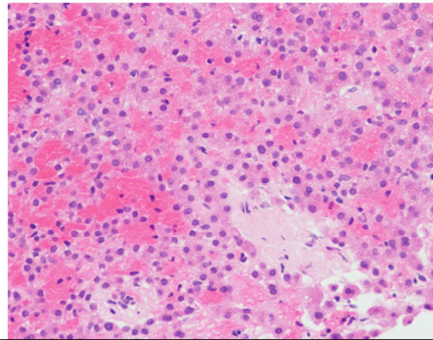
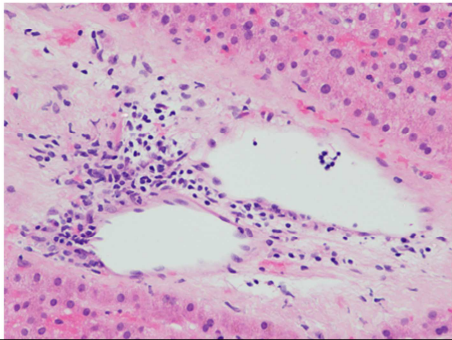
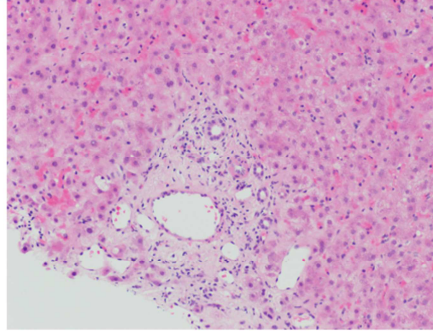
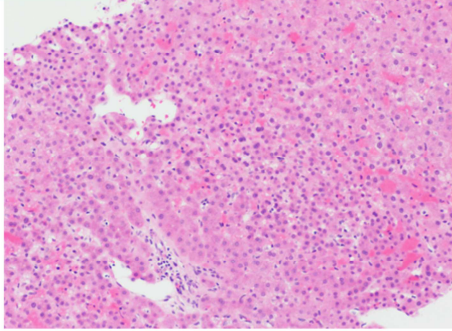
Triple IS: Advagraf + MMF + Prednisolone



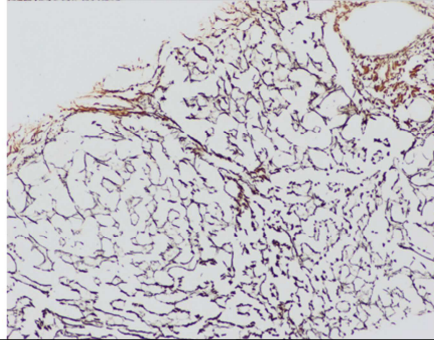
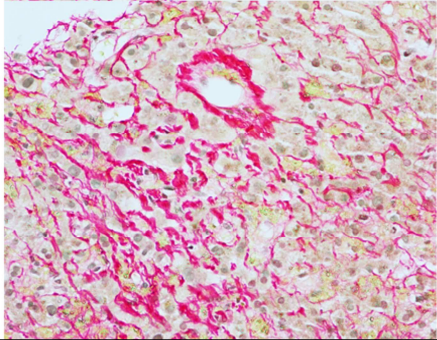
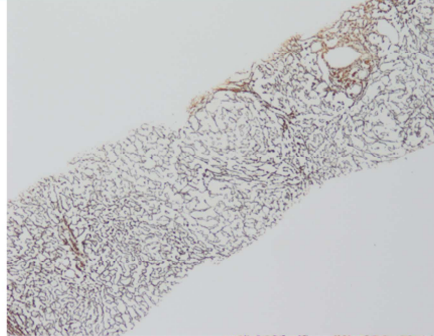
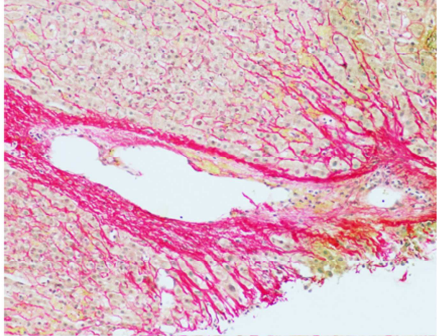
- Clinically and serologically not improving
- After 2 m from the previous biopsy: weight gain and ascites

2017- 2<sup>nd</sup> Allograft

+5y 4m: graft dysfunction



2017- 2<sup>nd</sup> Allograft +5y 4m

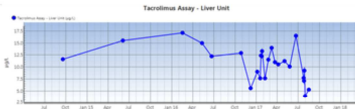


## Additional clinical information

- Imaging studies:  
No vascular compromise  
Negative
- Serology:  
Negative



- Other:  
Tacrolimus  
15.5 µg/L



- DSA class I and class II  
Positive

MFI: 10.559

**2016 Comprehensive Update of the Banff Working Group on Liver Allograft Pathology: Introduction of Antibody-Mediated Rejection**

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Pos

<p><b>Probable</b></p> <p>(1)</p> <p><b>Chronic Antibody-Mediated Rejection</b></p> <p>in AIH as primary disease Ret-transplanted previous episodes of T-cell mediated rejection and coexistent acute Antibody-mediated rejection</p>
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AD  
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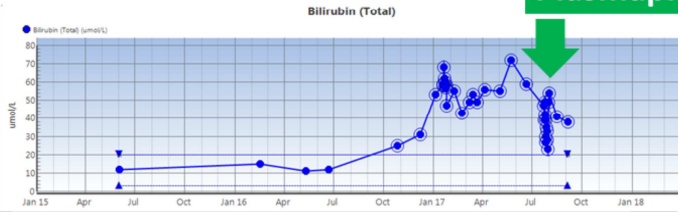
auko-  
CMR

With all these findings features are highly suggestive of cAMR

2017- 2<sup>nd</sup> Allograft

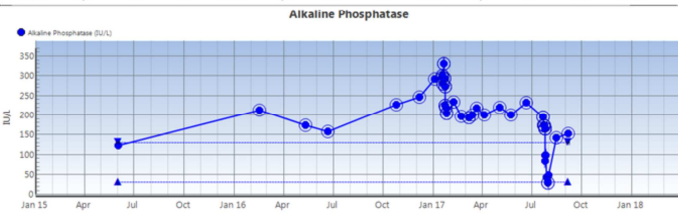
+5y 2m: graft dysfunction

Plasmapheresis (25-30/7/17)



LFTs 5/9/17

ALB: 33

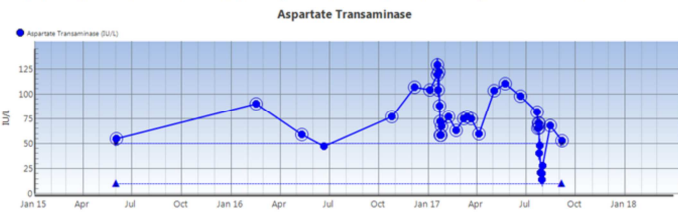


AST: 53 IU/L

BIL: 38 umol/L

GGT: 194 IU/L

ALP: 153 IU/L



PLT: 181 10<sup>9</sup>/L

## **Discussion points**

### **Peculiar histology: SOS/VOD-like**

#### **Differential diagnosis**

- Mechanical venous outflow obstruction
- Pro-thrombotic condition
- DILI (?TAC)
- AMR

### **Long interval of normality (2011-2016) and relatively 'abrupt' onset**

? Precipitating factors (?TAC)

### **?Outcome of this patient**

High score on proposed cAMR score

**First transplant 1997 for AIH**

**Retransplantation in 2011 (+14y) for graft dysfunction**

**+12y**

**Abnormal LFTs**

**(AST 200, Bil 39, GGT 291, AlkP 584)**

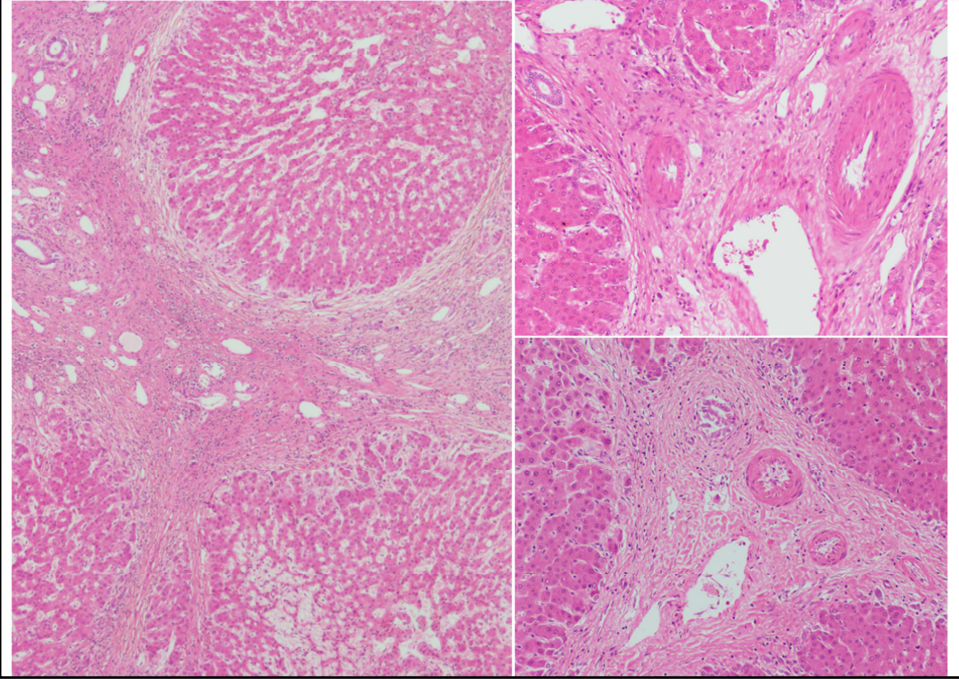
**?recurrent AIH**

**?rejection**

**?Cholangiopathy**

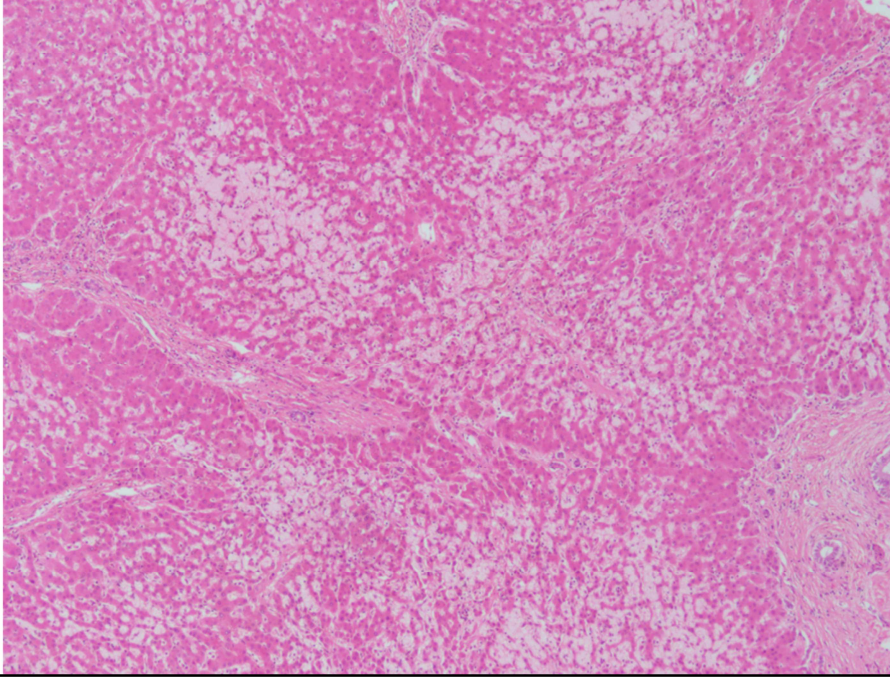
2011- Allograft hepatectomy

+14y



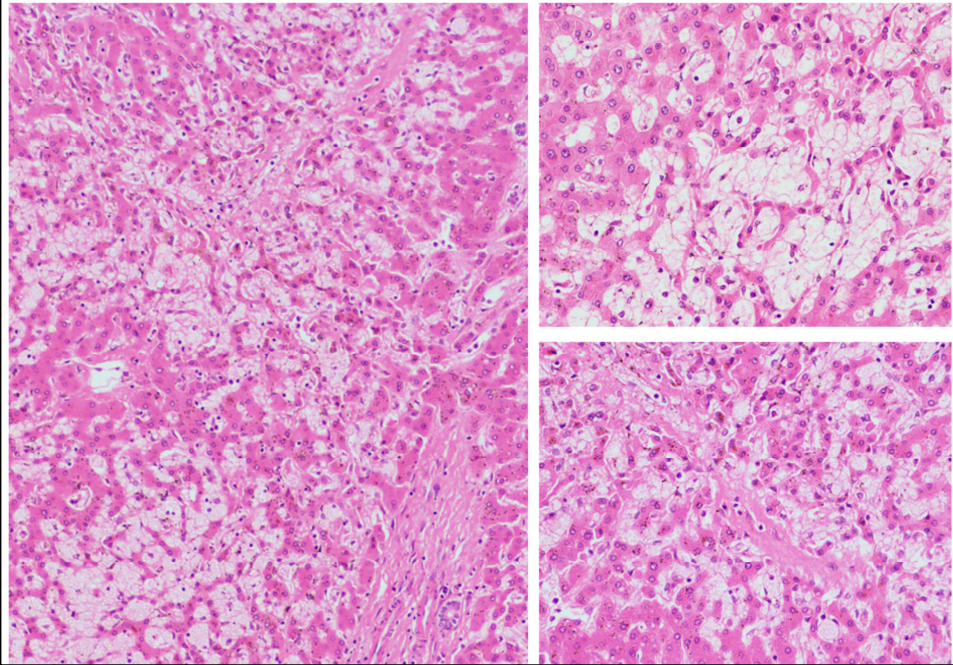
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+14y



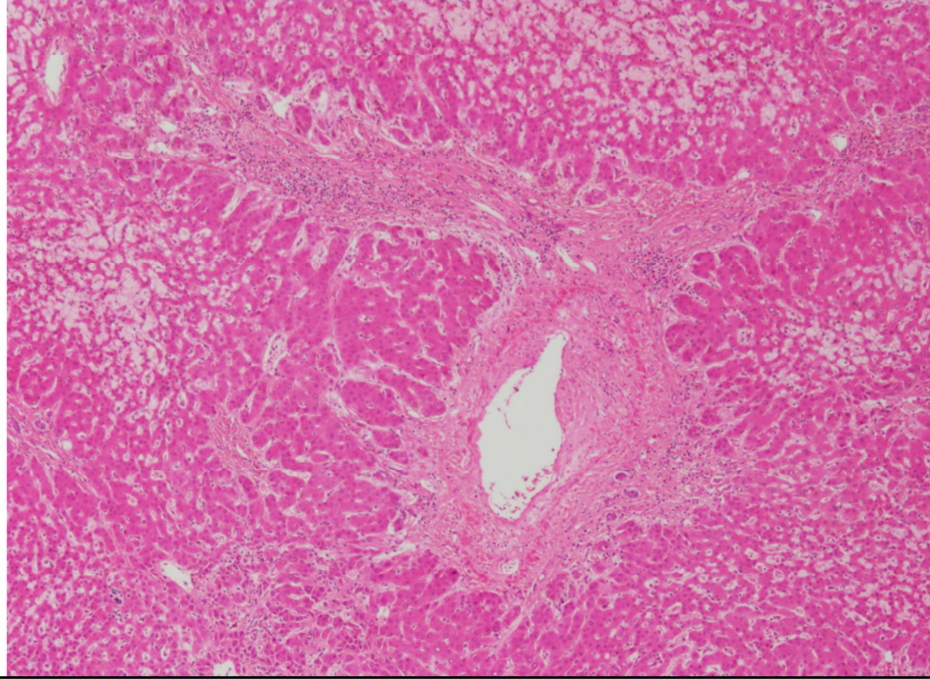
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+14y



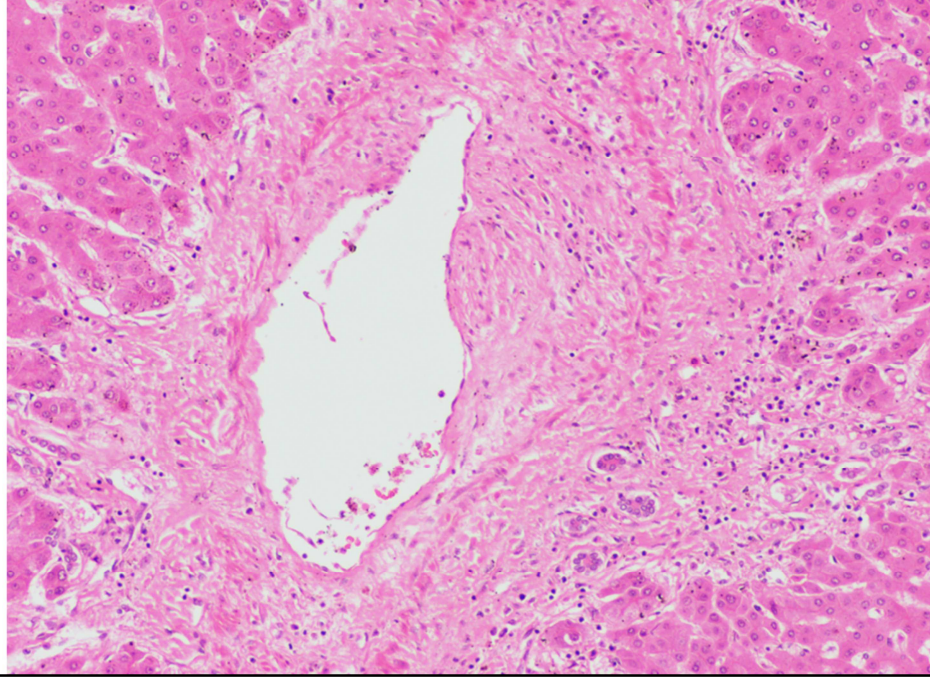
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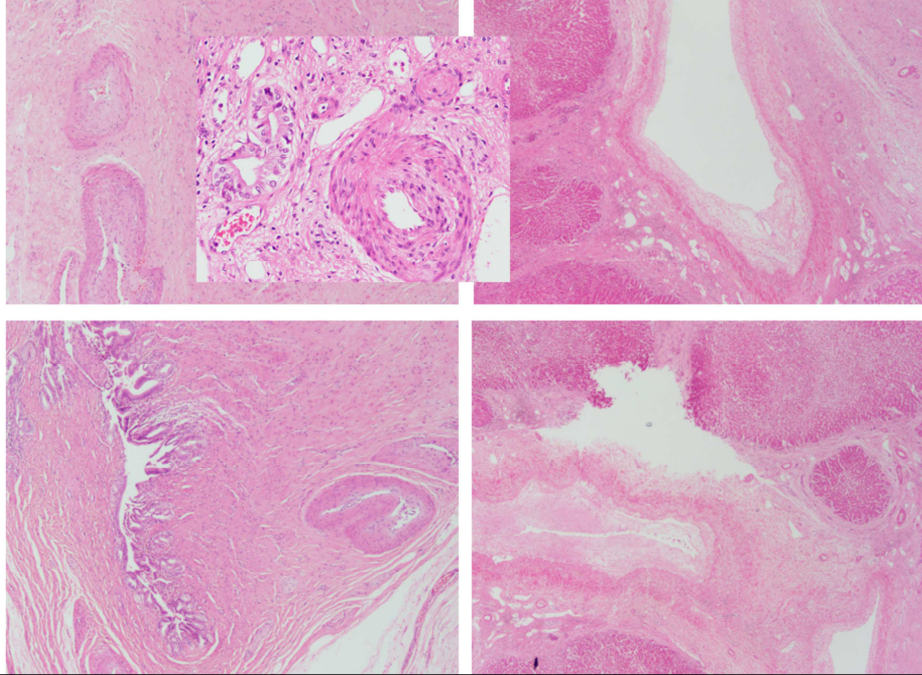
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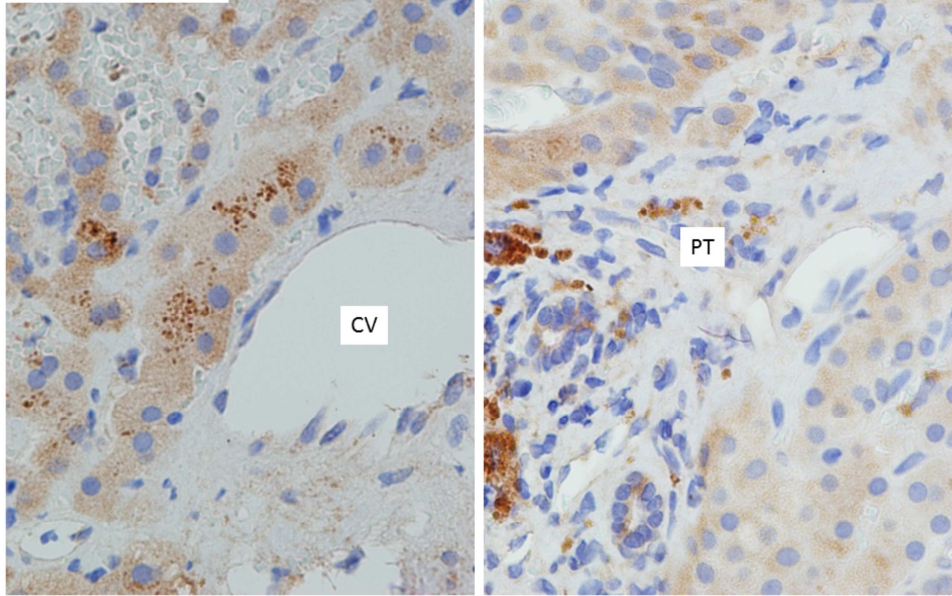


2011- Allograft hepatectomy

+14y



**C4d negative**



## References

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