Reply to: [Comment to: Development of lens opacities with peculiar characteristics in patients affected by thalassemia major on chelating treatment with deferasirox. Haematologica 2008;93:e9-10]

We thank Ford and Rojkjaer for drawing attention to the problem of children with b-thalassemia major who developed lens opacities during treatment with deferasirox (ICL670, Exjade®) and for reinforcing the main point of our report, namely the absolute need of assuring a formal and prospective monitoring of the comparative benefit/risk profiles of all the three available iron-chelating strategy.

For the sake of precision, it should be underlined that one of the reasons which retained our attention on the strange cluster which generated our report was the unusual morphology of the lesions we observed, consistent with the pre-clinical findings in rats and different from the ones observed in those β-thalassemic patients with iron overload.

Let's hope, that an operational consensus on the need and practicability of an active pharmacovigilance program in this area could be reached as early as possible for all chelating drugs.

Nicoletta Masera
Clinica Pediatrica, Università di Milano-Bicocca, Milan, Italy

Haematologica 2008; 93:e50. DOI: 10.3324/haematol.13133