A mother presented her 1-month old term infant with a slowly progressive subcutaneous 1.2 by 1.2 cm swelling on the left upper arm (Fig. 1a). On the same site, 0.1 mL Bacille Calmette-Guérin (BCG) vaccine had been provided intradermally on the day of birth. Manufactured by Queen Saovabha Memorial Institute, Thai Red Cross Society, Bangkok, Thailand (Lot No. FB00817), 1 mL contains about 2 million viable bacteria of the live attenuated Mycobacterium bovis Tokyo 172 strain. No systemic symptoms were reported and on examination, no lymphadenitis was present. A wait-and-see treatment approach was adopted, the infant was discharged home, and a local health care worker documented the spontaneous resolution of the lesion and the natural course of healing (Fig. 1b–d).

BCG vaccines have been used for nearly a century, are considered safe and remain recommended by a majority of countries [1]. Approximately 1–10% experience adverse reactions, of which most are localised (i.e. abscess, lymphadenitis); systemic adverse reactions (e.g. osteomyelitis, BCG disease) are rarely observed [2]. Adapting a conservative wait and see approach for localized BCG injection site reactions as well as non-suppurative lymphadenitis, leads to a self-limiting, spontaneous resolution of symptoms in the majority of cases.

Acknowledgements

The Shoklo Malaria Research Unit is part of the Wellcome Trust Mahidol University Oxford Tropical Medicine Research Programme supported by the Wellcome Trust of Great Britain.

References
