A 10 year old boy presented with fever and lethargy of two week’s duration. He was pale, and had cervical and axillary lymphadenopathy, with moderate hepatosplenomegaly. The automated complete blood count carried out on an Advia-60 machine (Bayer, Baroda, India), a three part differential analyser, revealed a haemoglobin of 99 g/litre, a total leucocyte count of 273 × 10^9/litre, and a platelet count of 156 × 10^9/litre. This is especially true for automated results, as well as for the findings of manual routine blood smear examination. A haemoglobin of 99 g/litre defines an anaemia, but the automated platelet count does not conform to the clinical profile of the patient, along with blood smear examination. There is a need for users of automated haematology analysers to be aware of spurious results related to automated haematology analysers now exist. There is a need for users of automated data to be aware of the potential sources of error on these otherwise reliable instruments.
Cytoplasmic fragments of leukaemic cells masquerading as platelets in an automated haematology analyser
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