References


Table 2  Results of paired samples tested

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total No of paired swabs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First day negative and fifth day negative</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First day positive and fifth day positive</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First day positive and fifth day negative</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First day negative and fifth day positive</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>90</td>
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</table>

*One swab tested on day 1, the other on day 5.

Bacteria on blood films

Even in severe septicemia bacteria are rarely seen on a peripheral smear, and the occasional reports of such findings in Gram negative septicemia have been confined to meningococci. We now report similar findings in a case of *Klebsiella* infection.

An 18 month old Nigerian boy was transferred from Lagos for further management of acute lymphoblastic leukaemia. Infective complications of induction chemotherapy had included a *Klebsiella* pneumoniae and an *Escherichia coli* urinary tract infection, which had both been successfully treated with gentamicin. Assessment on admission suggested haematological remission. Forty eight hours later a fever of 38.5°C developed, for which no cause was found, and which responded to a 10 day course of intravenous gentamicin and azlocillin. Twenty four hours after these antibiotics were stopped his fever returned, accompanied by a sudden deterioration in his clinical condition. The haemoglobin was 11 g/dl, white cells 0-7 x 10^9/l (2% neutrophils, 98% lymphocytes), and platelets were 140 x 10^9/l.

Blood films of vacutainer edetic acid samples from Hickman and peripheral sites showed clumps of rod like structures, with occasional cocci interspersed (figure). Repeated sampling from both sites using fresh stains consistently showed similar appearances. A Gram stained spin deposit of a 1/5 dilution of blood in distilled water showed that the clumps consisted of Gram negative bacilli and occasional Gram positive cocci. Twenty four hour subcultures of two sets of blood cultures from Hickman and peripheral sites confirmed the presence of Gram negative bacilli, later identified as *Klebsiella pneumoniae*. Gram positive cocci were not seen or cultured. Despite immediate treatment with intravenous gentamicin, azlocillin, and fluoxacinil his condition deteriorated and he died forty eight hours later. Subsequent disc sensitivity testing showed that the organism was resistant to all three antibiotics.

The rarity of overt bacteraemia on a blood film is related both to the low concentrations of organisms in most bacteraemias (<2 x 10^3 colony forming units/ml) and the large concentration probably needed to visualise organisms on a blood smear (5 x 10^8 - 1 x 10^9 colony forming units/ml). Reik suggested that *Neisseria meningitidis* is the only Gram negative organism ever likely to be present in such a high concentration. This case clearly shows otherwise, and the finding of Gram negative clumps should not be dismissed as laboratory contamination.

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Prevalence of atypical naevi in a general pathology practice

I read with interest the recent article by Seywright et al on a proposed subclassification of "dysplastic naevi" based on architectural and cytological atypia. Their results showed that out of 100 melanocytic naevi reviewed, 38 were regarded as being atypical—that is, exhibited either architectural atypia alone or in combination with cytological atypia. Such a high prevalence in this series most likely reflects the source of the material, which was the university department of dermatology, which has a referral centre for pigmented lesions and, indeed, as the authors correctly pointed out, that such findings should not be regarded as representative of the incidence of atypical naevi in the Scottish population as a whole.

Prompted by these results I decided to review the histology of 114 consecutive melanocytic naevi reported in 1985 from a general pathology practice consisting of two consultants, one of whom has a special interest in dermatopathology. The Table illustrates the main findings using the terminology suggested by Seywright et al in their article.

From these results it can be seen that about 6% of all the melanocytic naevi in this series were in the atypical category. This figure compares favourably with those of previous reports in which the prevalence of "dysplastic naevi" in the general population was estimated to be about 5%.1-4

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References

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total No of melanocytic naevi</th>
<th>Banal naevi</th>
<th>Atypical naevi</th>
<th>Architectural atypia</th>
<th>Architectural and cytological atypia</th>
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<tr>
<td>114</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
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This volume attempts to overcome the shortcomings of SNOP and SNO MED for the ultrastructural pathologist, providing a coding system that should occupy the T-YX section of SNO MED. The problems of ultrastructural coding in diagnostic work are considered in the introduction, and as they are defined in that section, seem to be adequately resolved here. As entertainment, the test is less compelling than HB Morton's List of Huntingdonshire Cabmen, but when used to classify six ultrastructurally studied biopsies it proved effective and simple to use.

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