Asymptomatic Bacteriuria in Health and Glomerulonephropathies

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Dear Sir,

We were interested in the paper by Phanichphant and Boonpucknavig [1] reporting a high prevalence (18.7%) of asymptomatic bacteriuria in patients with various glomerulonephropathies undergoing renal biopsy in comparison with a group of healthy subjects.

We have reviewed 202 patients with primary glomerulonephritis who had a mid-stream urine specimen cultured immediately before undergoing renal biopsy. Table I shows the number of patients in each histological category and the number with infected urine ($> 100 \times 10^6$ bacteria/1 in a pure culture). We had only 4 patients with a urinary tract infection. Two men were infected with *Escherichia coli*, 1 man with *Enterobacter* spp. and 1 woman with *Proteus mirabilis*.

Table I. Urinary tract infection at the time of renal biopsy in patients with glomerulonephritis

Patients admitted to hospital for elective surgery (gynecological, ear, nose and throat, ophthalmic, gastric, vascular) were used as a control group. The results of preoperative mid-stream urine cultures from 119 men and 102 women were reviewed. Four women from this group had *E. coli*, 1 man was infected with *P. mirabilis* and another with a group D streptococcus. When the total numbers of urinary tract infections in each group were compared, the overall infection rate was 2.0% in the glomerulonephritis patients (95% confidence limits 0–3.9%) and 2.7% in the control subjects (95% confidence limits 0.5–2.9%).

We were not able to demonstrate any increase in urinary tract infections in our patients with primary glomerulonephritis, either when compared with another group of patients having surgical procedures or with the well-known prevalence rate of urinary tract infections in apparently healthy adults.

Our findings do not support the observations of Phanichphant and Boonpucknavig [1].

Male (n = 136)

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Category

Minimal change nephropathy Focal glomerulosclerosis Focal glomerulonephritis IgA nephropathy Henoch-Schönlein nephritis Goodpasture's syndrome Diffuse proliferative GN Mesangioproliferative GN Mesangiocapillary GN I Mesangiocapillary GN II Rapidly progressive GN Membranous nephropathy End-stage GN

GN = Glomerulonephritis.

Female (n = 66)

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Reference

1 Phanichphant, S.; Boonpucknavig, V.: Asymptomatic bacteriuria in health and glomerulonephropathies. Nephron 44: 121–124 (1986).