Abnormalities of Skin in Hereditary Nephritis

C.E.

Clifford E.

Kashtan

Department of Pediatrics, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minn., USA

Clifford E. Kashtan, MD, Department of Pediatrics, University of Minnesota, Box 491 UMHC, 515 Delaware Street S.E., Minneapolis, MN 55455 (USA)

Dear Sir,

References

I read with interest the recent report by Kagan et al. [1]. However, our paper [2] was inaccurately cited.

While we did observe an antigenic abnormality of the carboxyterminal noncollagenous domain of type IV collagen in basement membranes of Alport patients, we did not find multilamination of the epidermal basement membrane. In fact, routine electron microscopy of these structures showed no consistent abnormalities. Gubler and Habib [3] reported similar findings. Martinez-Hernandez and Amenta [4] mentioned briefly that they observed multilamination of epidermal and dermal vascular basement membranes in an Alport kindred but they did not provide photomicrographs nor discuss findings in controls. Clinical abnormalities of the skin, such as bullous disease, are rare in Alport patients despite the fact that the antigenic deficit is common [unpubl. observations].

Kagan et al. may be correct in their speculation that a single gene defect affecting basement membrane collagen accounts for nephritis, deafness and epidermolysis bullosa in their family, but coinheritance of independent mutations is an alternative explanation.

Kagan, A.; Feld, S.; Chemke, J.; Bar-Khayim, Y.: Occurrence of hereditary nephritis, pretibial epidermolysis bullosa and β -thal-assemia minor in two siblings with end-stage renal disease. Nephron 49:331–332 (1988).

Kashtan, C; Fish, A.J.; Kleppel, M.; Yoshioka, K; Michael, A.F.: Nephritogenic antigen determinants in epidermal and renal basement membranes of kindreds with Alport-type familial nephritis. J. clin. Invest. 78:1035–1044 (1986).

Gubler, M.C.; Habib, R.: Alport's syndrome-hereditary nephritis. In Holliday, Barratt, Vernier, Pediatric nephrology, 2nd ed., pp. 470–476 (Williams & Wilkins, Baltimore 1987).