Multiple Autoimmune Diseases in Sarcoidosis

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We read with great interest the work of Kondo et al. [1] in your issue of September 1993. The authors state that their case report seems to be the first case in which three autoimmune diseases, namely autoimmune haemolytic anaemia (AHIA), Sjögren's syndrome and idiopathic thrombocytopenic purpura (ITP), were accompanied by sarcoidosis in one patient [1]. We have recently reported one case of polyglandular autoimmune (PGA) syndrome type III, including autoimmune thyroid disease (ATD) and insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus (IDDM), coeliac disease and sarcoidosis [2]. The observed ATD was a chronic lymphocytic thyroiditis with Graves' ophthalmopathy [2].

She had also vitiligo and transiently positive adrenal antibodies. The HLA haplotype of our patient was A1, 3; B8, 40; Cw3, w7; DR3, 6; DQ1, 2, thus highly compatible with those occurring in autoimmune diseases and sarcoidosis [3, 4]. In addition, one patient with Graves' thyrotoxicosis, vitiligo and pernicious anaemia in the course of sarcoidosis was reported by Hanock and Millard [5] and one patient with the TASS syndrome (thyroiditis, Addison's disease, Sjögren's syndrome and sarcoidosis) was described [6].

The associations reported by Kondo et al. [1] as well as by other authors [2, 5, 6] suggest that sarcoidosis might play an important role in the development of autoimmune diseases.

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