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Cold Agglutinins in Parenteral Drug-Addicts Positive for HIV Antibody

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We have read with interest the article of Pruzanski et al. [1] about the presence of cold agglutinins (CA) in homosexual patients positive for HIV antibody. We would like to report our results on the presence of CA in a population of parenteral drug addicts.

We have studied CA in a population of 40 drug addicts positive for HIV antibody (ELISA), including 1 with AIDS, 8 with AIDS-related complex (ARC), 5 with chronic lymphadenopathy syndrome and 26 subjects free of symptoms. We have found CA in 5 cases (12.5%); 1 had ARC (12.5%) and 4 were symptom-free drug addicts (15%). In all 5 patients, the possibility of an intercurrent infection caused by mycoplasma, cy-tomegalovirus or Epstein-Barr virus was excluded. CA was specified as anti-i in the 5 cases.

Our results in a population of parenteral drug addicts positive for HIV antibody were similar to those reported by Pruzanski et al. [1] in homosexual patients. We have found CA in 12.5% of the patients and therefore agree with the opinion of Pruzanski et al. [1] that the presence of C A should be added to the list of humoral abnormalities encountered in patients with HIV infections.

Reference

1 Pruzanski, W.; Roelcke, D.; Donnelly, E.; Lui, L.C.: Persistent cold agglutinins in AIDS and related disorders. Acta. haemat. 75: 171-173(1986).