In Reply

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The question raised by Dhar, Kanwar and Ghosh with respect to the frequency of concomitance in our paediatric patients is one which we anticipated would arise. We ourselves were surprised; nevertheless, we had to record facts. Descriptions of actual lesions, in table 3 of our article [1], were, beyond all reasonable doubt, those of psoriasis. It is in infants and the very young, when there is considerable eczema, that psoriatic lesions may be missed unless they are deliberately sought. In clinical practice it is enough to treat the eczema without defining, precisely, other lesions. In our research we had to decide clearly if the children had psoriasis as well or not. This happened only in the very young. Other cases in children, from about 5 years upward, presented no obvious problem. Our

results uncover the fact that psoriasis does also occur in children more frequently than we have been led to believe.

The fact that Dhar et al. found no concomitance in their series does not necessarily mean that the diseases are, as they infer, mutually exclusive. Such hasty deductions perpetuate mistaken notions. Their results only show that, in their series, no concomitance was found. We do not know if evidence for psoriasis was deliberately sought in each case of atopic dermatitis and vice versa or not. Manifestations of these diseases could vary in temperate and tropical climates. Some of their atopic children may yet develop psoriasis. Larger series may give different results. We do not disagree with their final statement giving an explanation for the co-existence of these diseases (it seems, however, to conflict with their earlier remark about mutual exclusiveness). The main purpose of our article was to demonstrate that these two diseases do occur in the same individual, concurrently or consecutively. This has been conclusively demonstrated.

Reference

Beer WE. Smith AE. Kassab JY, Smith PHS. Rowland Payne CME: Concomitance of psoriasis and atopic dermatitis. Dermatology 1992;184:265-270.