Letter to the Editor

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Preliminary Report of the Treatment of Behçet Syndrome with Oral Poliomyelitis Vaccine (Sabin)

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Key Words

Poliomyelitis vaccine

Behçet syndrome

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A 33-year-old married woman, mother of two children, had been suffering for 12 years from recurrent aphthae of the oral mucosa, recurrent perigenital ulcerations, acne-like papulopustular eruption of the face and bouts of generalized furunculosis. There were no eye lesions. Sterile papulovesicular eruptions were elicited at the sites of needle pricking and intracutaneous saline injection after an interval of 24 h.

The patient was presented at a meeting of the Tel Aviv Dermatological Society where the diagnosis of Behçet's syndrome was confirmed. Treatment with corticosteroids, γ -globulin, vitamins, etc. caused only symptomatic improvement.

In view of the fact that a viral etiology has been suspected in Behçet's syndrome, and considering the results of a previous therapeutic study [Tager, 1974] in 23 patients with recurrent herpes simplex, in whom a 74% cure rate was achieved by oral poliomyelitis vaccine (Sabin), I decided to try this vaccine in the above-presented patient.

4 drops of the Sabin vaccine were administered orally, once a month, during 3 months. By the end of that time, the manifestations of the disease, i.e. the oral and perigenital ulcerations and skin lesions, had all disappeared. During a follow-up period of 3 years from the completion of treatment, no recurrence has been noted.

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Obviously, the possibility of spontaneous remission cannot be excluded and, at any rate, no definite conclusions can be drawn from a single case. However, this very satisfactory result would warrant the treatment of other cases with Behçet's syndrome by Sabin's vaccine, in order to evaluate its efficacy.

References