Mastocytosis and the Mast Cell

MASTOCYTOSIS
AND THE MAST CELL

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Preface

It is now recognized that urticaria pigmentosa or mastocytosis, once considered a purely benign affection of the skin, may involve internal organs and tissues with sometimes fatal results. The disease has become the concern of the internist, hematologist, roentgenologist, biochemist and pathologist as well as of the dermatologist. Cutaneous manifestations of mastocytosis which were previously unknown have recently been described whilst systemic involvement is being reported with increasing frequency. A reappraisal of the disease, such as we have attempted in the first section of this book, may therefore be timely.

The second section of the book comprises a necessarily limited survey of what is known or conjectured with regard to the tissue mast cell: here emphasis is laid on the participation of this cell in various human physiological and pathological processes. The mast cell is thought to play a major or minor role in numerous regulative mechanisms within the connective tissue, as well as in a wide variety of immuno-allergic conditions. It is subject to hormonal influences and may be concerned in the reaction to stress. Knowledge of the nature of the mast cell thus furthers a more complete understanding of some fundamental biological phenomena.

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Jerusalem, July 1966 Felix Sagher

Zvi Even-Paz

Contents

Section One: Mastocytosis

Chapter I—Definition 3
Chapter II—History 4
Chapter III—Classification 8
Chapter IV—Etiology and Pathogenesis 10
A congenital or nevoid abnormality, possibly hereditary 10
A metabolic disturbance 11
An infective or toxic state 11
An inflammatory process 11
A blood dyscrasia or a reticuloendotheliosis 11
Mastocytosis associated with other diseases 12

Chapter V—Incidence of Mastocytosis 14
Incidence of various types 14
Age incidence 15
Sex incidence 16
Complextion-type and race incidence 17

Chapter VI—Cutaneous Mastocytosis: Clinical Types and Lesions 18
Solitary mastocytoma 18
Disseminated forms of cutaneous mastocytosis 20
Bullous urticaria pigmentosa 40
Telangiectatic types of urticaria pigmentosa: telangiectasia macularis eruptiva perstans 44
Hemorrhagic lesions 46
Diffuse and erythrodermic forms of cutaneous mastocytosis 47

Chapter VII—Systemic Mastocytosis (Part ) 55
Introduction 55
Benign and malignant systemic mastocytosis 56
Incidence of systemic mastocytosis 56
Incidence of malignant mastocytosis 56

XII Contents

Sex and age onset ratios in systemic mastocytosis 57
Tabulation of findings in 145 cases of ‘proved’ or ‘possible’ systemic mastocytosis 58

Chapter VIII—Systemic Mastocytosis (Part 2) 93
Liver and spleen involvement 93
Liver function tests and other biochemical changes 94
Lymph node involvement 95
Bone marrow involvement 96
Peripheral blood changes 98

Chapter IX—Systemic Mastocytosis (Part 3) 105
Roentgenographic studies in mastocytosis 106
Roentgenographic bone changes 106
The differential diagnosis of roentgenographic bone changes in mastocytosis 114
Roentgenographic lung changes 116
Roentgenographic changes in liver and spleen 117
Roentgenographic changes in the gastrointestinal tract 117

An Atlas of Roentgenographic Appearances in Mastocytosis 120

Chapter X—Symptomatology 148
Pruritus 149
Vascular disturbances—flushing 149
Gastrointestinal symptoms 151
Skeletal symptoms 152
Respiratory tract symptoms 152
Neurological symptoms 153
Ophthalmologic symptoms 153
Otologic symptoms 154
Hemorrhagic tendency 154
Skin ulceration 155
Hypersensitivity 155

Chapter XI—Clinical Diagnosis and Differential Diagnosis 156
Age of onset 156
Urtication of the lesions (Darier’s sign) 156
Dermographism of the apparently uninvolved skin159
Color of the lesions160
Cytological procedures160
Intradermal tests161
Examination of urine and serum for mast cell metabolites163
Clinical differential diagnosis of cutaneous mastocytosis164

Chapter XII—Histopathology and Histologic Differential Diagnosis171
Skin'sections 172
Bone sections182
Histologic examination of other tissues 187

Contents XIII

Chapter XIII—Fatal Cases and Autopsy Findings189

Chapter XIV—The Treatment of Mastocytosis229
Histamine and serotonin antagonists 229
Heparin antagonists231
Histamine and serotonin liberators231
Hyaluronidase233
Steroids and corticotrophin234
Antimitotic drugs235
Irradiation therapy—external and internal237
General medical and surgical procedures in patients with mastocytosis 238

Chapter XV—Prognosis239

Section Two: The Tissue Mast Cell

Chapter XVI—Definition of the Tissue Mast Cell245

Chapter XVII—Mast Cell Distribution in Animal and Human Tissues246

Distribution in animal tissues246
Distribution in human tissues247
Chapter XVIII—The Origin of Mast Cells251

Chapter XIX—The Relationship of Tissue Mast Cells to Other Cells254

Mast cells and blood basophils254
Mast cells and eosinophils255
Mast cells and chromaffin cells
Mast cells and juxtaglomerular cells

Chapter XX—Morphological Features of Tissue Mast Cells 257
   Ordinary light microscopy
   Phase contrast microscopy
   Ultra-violet and polarized light illumination
   Electron microscope studies
   Ameboid movement in mast cells

Chapter XXI—The Staining of Mast Cells 269
   Metachromatic staining
   Periodic acid — Schiff (PAS) reaction
   Other stains used for mast cell identification
   Fixation
   Dehydration

Chapter XXII—Biochemistry of Mast Cells 278
   Heparin and mast cells
   Hyaluronic acid and mast cells
   Histamine and mast cells

XIV Contents

   Serotonin and mast cells
   Dopamine and mast cells
   Slow reacting substance (SRS) in mast cells
   'Spreading substance' and mast cells
   Enzyme systems in mast cells

Chapter XXIII—Function of Tissue Mast Cells and Their Participation in Various Physiological and Pathological Conditions
   Part 1: General Conditions 292
   Introduction 292
   Mast cells and the integrity and metabolism of connective tissue
   Mast cells and tissue growth
   Mast cells and tumor growth
   Mast cells in the defense against infectious and noxious agents
   Mast cells and calciphylaxis
   Mast cells and calcergy (mastocalcergy)
   Mast cells and the regional fixation of blood-borne particles
   Mast cells and fat transport
The effects of some experimental diets on mast cells in animals
Drug induced hypothermia
Antimitotic drugs and mast cells
Radiation and mast cells
The influence of hormones on tissue mast cells
Mast cells in anaphylactic, immuno-allergic and hypersensitivity states
Blood basophil tests and allergic states
Chapter XXIV—Function of Tissue Mast Cells and Their Participation in Various Physiological and Pathological Conditions
Part 2: Special Conditions
Some examples of mast cell participation in allergic and sensitivity states in humans
Atherosclerosis and mast cells
Mast cells in thrombotic and bleeding states
Mast cells and collagen diseases
Mast cells and diseases of the gastrointestinal tract
Mast cells and cirrhosis of the liver
Mast cells and renal disease
Mast cells and alopecia areata
Mast cells and migraine
Mast cells and eye conditions
Mast cells and carcinoid

References

Author Index

Subject Index

List of Tables

Section One: Mastocytosis
Table I. Classification of mastocytosis
Table II. Sex and age ratios in mastocytosis
Table III. 145 cases of mastocytosis with proved or possible systemic involvement
Table IV. Organ and tissue involvement in mastocytosis
Table V. Hematologic disturbances in systemic mastocytosis
Table VI. Incidence of diffuse- and circumscribed-types of roentgenographic bone lesions in 145 cases of systemic mastocytosis
Table VII. The association of diffuse- and circumscribed-types of roentgenographic bone lesions with other evidence of systemic involvement
Table VIII. Relation of roentgenographic bone changes in mastocytosis to age of the
Table IX. Relation of roentgenographic bone changes in mastocytosis to sex of the patient
Table X. The incidence of symptoms and findings associated with mastocytosis
Table XI. Differential diagnosis of urticaria pigmentosa and secondary maculopapular syphilis
Table XII. Bullous urticaria pigmentosa—clinical differential diagnosis
Table XIII. Differentiation of flushing attacks of mastocytosis and of the carcinoid syndrome
Table XIV. Clinical differential diagnosis of telangiectasia macularis eruptiva perstans
Table XV. Histologic differential diagnosis of bullous urticaria pigmentosa
Table XVI. Histologic differential diagnosis of telangiectasia macularis eruptiva perstans
Table XVII. Fatal cases of mastocytosis
Table XVIII. The course of the cutaneous eruption of urticaria pigmentosa in 59 children followed to age of 10 years or beyond
Table XIX. Duration of disease in 25 cases of mastocytosis with fatal termination

Section Two: The Tissue Mast Cell
Table XX. Average mast cell counts in normal human skin
Table XXI. Main morphologic differences between tissue mast cells and blood basophils
Table XXII. Biologically potent substances present or possibly present in mast cells
Table XXIII. Factors accelerating or decelerating the mast cell-histamine chain

Diagrams

Diagram I. Origin and interrelationships of the tissue mast cell
Diagram II. The ‘mast cell cycle’ in the connective tissue
Diagram III. The ‘mast cell-histamine chain’
Diagram IV. The action of calcifiers and challengers in the induction of the calciphylactic response
Diagram V. The mechanism of sideromastocalciphylaxis
Diagram VI. The influence of hormones on tissue mast cells
Diagram VII. The tissue mast cell in the pathogenesis of myxedema
Diagram VIII. The mucosal mast cell as a mediator of gastric secretory stimulation
Diagram IX. The role of the mast cell in the acute allergic reaction