

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Peripheral Blood Lymphocyte Subpopulations in Patients with Viral Warts

I read with great interest a short report by Betti et al. on peripheral blood lymphocyte subpopulations in patients with viral warts (Acta Derm Venereol (Stockh) 1986; 66: 155), and I believe that their findings on the negative correlation between OKT 3 and OKT 4 numbers as well as OKT 4/OKT 8 ratio and duration and extent of wart lesions are of great clinical interest. However, the authors do not give any data concerning the types of warts, and there is already substantial evidence that immune host responses are related to the types of causative human papillomaviruses (HPV). The most decreased cell mediated immunity was found in patients with long lasting plane and intermediate warts induced by HPV 3, 10, 27 and 28, and less decreased in myrmecia warts due to HPV 1 (1).

The differences in host cell mediated immune responses associated with different causative HPVs appear to be of greatest importance for persistence and regression of warts (2, 3). I do realize that typing of HPVs by molecular hybridization is still not a routine procedure for most dermatological institutions, but there is a highly significant correlation between the histology of warts and HPV types (4). There is no major difficulty in evaluating the HPV type if the biopsy is taken and processed in a right way, and the cytopathic effect is evident. The whole issue of Clinics in Dermatology (5) is dealing with many aspects of HPV infections, with special chapters *inter alia* on humoral and cell-mediated immunity. It is of great interest whether the correlation found by the authors between the extent and duration of lesions and abnormalities of cell-mediated immune responses could be confirmed for all types of warts, and what differences, if any, are between various wart types.

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