Correspondence

INSTRUCTIONS FOR LETTERS TO THE EDITOR
Editorial comment in the form of a Letter to the Editor is invited; however, it should not exceed 800 words, with a maximum of 10 references and no more than 2 figures (submitted as camera ready hard copy per Journal Guidelines) or tables and no subdivision for an Abstract, Methods, or Results. Letters should have no more than 3 authors. Full name(s) and address of the author(s) should accompany the letter as well as the telephone number, fax number, or E-mail address.
Contact. The Managing Editor, The Journal of Rheumatology, 920 Yonge Street, Suite 115, Toronto, Ontario M4J 3G7, CANADA. Tel: 416-967-5185; Fax: 416-967-7556; E-mail: jrheum@jrheum.com Financial associations or other possible conflicts of interest should always be disclosed.

Women in Rheumatology
To the Editor:
I find it fascinating to have observed the increase in numbers of women in medicine in the United States since I first arrived in the US as a Fellow in late 1959. I remember my first American Rheumatism Association (ARA) meeting and I think one of the only senior women rheumatologists present was Dr. Marian Ropes from Boston. Gradually, there has been an increase, as Dr. Clark and others have noted, in the percentage of women in rheumatology. However, I think there is still a relatively small proportion in academic medicine in the US.

I wonder if the very large number of women in rheumatology in Mexico may not reflect to some extent the culture of the country. In the US as you are probably aware, there is an increasing number of women in every branch of medicine, including surgery, orthopedic surgery, and other surgical subspecialties. It would be of interest to know that percentage in Mexico and other Central and South American countries and of considerable interest to do comparative studies with rheumatology, for example, in Great Britain or the Scandinavian countries.

Although Clark, et al’s data were not totally clear cut, the implication was that women physicians might choose rheumatology because of their ability to be more empathic and sensitive. It has been my observation over the years that in academic medicine there are relatively few women in power positions; could this be due to a lack of assertiveness, to not being resolute, determined, and ambitious? The reasons often given for this lack of leadership include being married, and having families and many other responsibilities. However, I wonder if it may not indicate that the lack of the characteristics mentioned and the dominance of the ones listed by Clark, et al might not result in the lack of women in leadership positions in rheumatology and academic medicine. I think that this is an interesting topic for further study and discussion.

EVELYN V. HESS, MD, MACP, MACP, University of Cincinnati Medical Center, Cincinnati, Ohio, USA.

REFERENCES

Dr. Alarcón replies
To the Editor:
Dr. Hess’s comments are pertinent and thought provoking. I would prefer that Dr. Clark address the issue regarding the large number of women in rheumatology in Mexico, since she practices there. I would point out, however, that throughout my visits to different Latin American countries over the last 20 years, I have witnessed the growing numbers of women physicians not only in rheumatology but in medicine in general (well over 50% in some places). More women are seeking higher education and perceive medicine within their reach; proportionally, fewer men appear to be interested in medicine. My informal assessment of this trend is that it is the result of, among other things, changes in the labor market. Physicians are not well paid in Latin America, despite their many years of graduate and postgraduate education. Women may be more willing to accept this economic reality than men.

Whether there is a “glass ceiling” effect for women in academic medicine and in professional organizations or, on the contrary, whether women actually choose not to occupy positions of leadership is unclear. My view is that both factors may play a role. The effect of temperamental dispositions as suggested by Dr. Hess is an intriguing, but debatable possibility.

Another scenario is that of women who went to medical school and entered into academic medicine several years (if not decades) ago, who may have developed a seemingly self-imposed, passive attitude as a result of their earlier experiences in an environment dominated by men. I should only add that data from the Mayo Clinic have shown that only a proactive plan to recruit, retain, and promote women in academic institutions will shift the demographic composition of the faculties in US medical schools as we know it today. Unfortunately, most medical schools do not seem to be willing to implement such a strategy.

GRACIELA S. ALARCÓN, MD, MPH, Jane Knight Lowe Professor of Medicine in Rheumatology, The University of Alabama at Birmingham, Birmingham, Alabama, USA.

REFERENCES

Dr. Clark, et al reply
To the Editor:
Dr. Hess is concerned about whether the relatively high percentage of women in rheumatology in our country reflects a cultural trend; this is difficult to answer since there have not been specific studies in the area, but it is important to mention that there are less than 400 board certified rheumatologists throughout Mexico, and rheumatology is not a widely distributed specialty and only one-third of them are women. For her second question about the preferences in specialty choices compared to other countries, we as well as the US and Canada have a lower proportion of women going to surgical specialties, for example, in orthopedic surgery only 7% are women, urology 5%, and general surgery 11%, whereas in family medicine 38% are women, dermatology 37%, and internal medicine 24%. We do not
have information about other countries in Latin America, and we agree that it would be interesting to compare our data with those from European countries.

The study was done to evaluate the female rheumatologist’s perception about career choice and performance from a gender point of view. We did not specifically explore issues regarding power positions, but it was not a thematic topic during interviews. We agree with Dr. Hess that currently there are fewer women in power positions, not only in medicine but also in other professional areas. This has been extensively studied in medical and non-medical literature and the two main reasons that explain this imbalance might be first the so-called “glass ceiling effect” that refers to the scarcity of women at the top levels of organizations due to invisible factors as much or more than overt discrimination that keep women from rising to the top in which several gender biases operate; and second, the genuine female decision of not seeking for power positions due to the need of a balanced life working through “support nets.”

Last but not the least, it has been described that a great proportion of persons (both male and female) chose their profession and working schedules according to the accepted cultural patterns for their sex.

PATRICIA CLARK, MD, MSc, IMSS; HOMERO MARTINEZ, MD, PhD, Universidad Autónoma de Mexico, IMSS, Mexico City, Mexico; GERY RYAN, PhD, University of Missouri, Columbia, Missouri, USA; LEBONOR BARIO, MD, Universidad Autónoma de Mexico, IMSS.

REFERENCES
1. González de León AD, Mujeres y medicina. Xochimilco: Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana-Xochimilco; 1990:35–44.

Do Antiflaggrin Antibodies Within the “Normal” Range Predict Rheumatoid Arthritis?

To the Editor:

In a large scale, prospective, nested case control study, Aho, et al invested antiflaggrin antibody (AFA) concentrations in pre-illness serum specimens to determine their ability to predict rheumatoid arthritis (RA). Also, they examined the association of baseline AFA levels with the rheumatoid factor (RF) status of study subjects at baseline and of the cases at the time of diagnosis. The main conclusions were, first, that AFA within the normal range (i.e., to 95th percentile of controls) can predict the development of RF positive RA, and second, that this antibody is closely associated with RF. Given the strong ability of elevated RF titers to predict RA, another relevant issue is whether AFA might be either an independent or a correlated predictor of RA. This letter further analyzes the data available within the valuable report of Aho, et al, in order to explore these issues relevant to the development of RA.

Did AFA levels within the “normal” range (i.e., to 95th percentile) predict RA? (Table 1). From data in Tables 1 and 3 of Aho, et al, the baseline serum AFA levels in the highest quintile distribution of control subject values (i.e., 0.074 to 2.348 optical density units) were further stratified. The 46 RA cases and 73 controls were divided into their upper normal (i.e., 80th to 95th percentiles) versus elevated (95th plus percentiles) levels (Table 1). Assuming that the serum AFA levels ≥ 0.074 units reported in Table 3 of Aho, et al include all higher values (i.e., the elevated 95th plus percentiles), then the AFA values within the upper normal range, i.e., from 0.074 (defines the 80th percentile) up to but not including ≥ 0.138 units (defines the 95% plus percentiles), do not predict RA (Table 1). Only the elevated levels of AFA of ≥ 0.138 units (95th plus percentiles) significantly predict RA with an odds ratio (OR) of 6.47 and 95% confidence intervals of 2.67 to 15.41, using the unmatched cross products analysis method.

Table 1. Odds ratios with 95% confidence intervals for predicting RA. Cases versus controls by percentile levels of baseline serum antiflaggrin antibodies (AFA)*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentiles of control AFA levels</th>
<th>Numbers of Subjects</th>
<th>OR†</th>
<th>95% CI†</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 20</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20–39</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>0.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40–59</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>1.19</td>
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<tr>
<td>60–79</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>1.30</td>
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<tr>
<td>80–94*</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>1.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95+*</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>365</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Modified from Table 1 of Aho, et al by stratifying the highest quintile of AFA levels into its upper normal (80 to 95 percentile) and elevated (95 plus percentiles) ranges.
†OR within the data set are based upon estimates derived from the unmatched cross products method.

In this study design that employed 3 matched controls per case, more precise analyses would need to be performed by the conditional logistic model to estimate OR of RA for females of AFA concentrations, but those data were not published.

Did heterogeneity occur within the highest quintile of AFA levels for predicting RA? The elevated AFA levels predicted RA to a significantly greater extent than did the upper normal 80th to 95th percentile values, both included within the highest quintile (Fisher’s exact 2 tailed test of levels 6 vs 5 in Table 1, p = 0.00037, OR 4.28, 95% CI 1.80–10.32). A linear trend for the relationship of AFA levels to the prediction of RA is significant only when the data for elevated values are included in analysis (Table 1). Although the available data in the report are detailed, they did not permit the analyses presented in Table 1 to be stratified into the 89 RF positive versus 35 RF negative RA cases and their respective controls. Possibly a subgroup (e.g., RF positive RA) might show a significant relationship between normal ranges of AFA levels and the prediction of RA?

Did baseline AFA levels within the normal range associate with RF status (Table 2)? At baseline, only the elevated levels of AFA (95th plus percentiles) significantly associated with a positive RF status among the future RA cases (OR 4.97). Significant associations also occurred in the controls (7.50) and the total study subjects (8.97). When the predictions of cases and controls are analyzed according to baseline RF status (Table 2), again only the elevated baseline AFA levels (95th plus percentiles) associated with the development of RA. The OR is 2.81 in RF+ and 4.24 in RF− subjects, being significant in the latter subgroup and in the total subjects, with an OR of 5.78.

Further analyses are needed to clarify the relationships of AFA to RA. Critical analyses of prospective data promise to reveal essential insights into the complex pathways of RA. Further analyses of the total 124 future RA patients stratified by their RF status at both baseline and diagnosis also was not permitted by the data presented. The 4 subgroups of cases (and their respective controls) would be: (1) RF positive at both times (n = 36); (2) RF negative at both times (n = 32); (3) cases who converted from RF negative to positive (n = 53); and (4) the few cases (n = 3) who converted from RF positive to negative. Relationships of normal or elevated AFA levels to RA may be particularly strong in one versus another subgroup, which deserves further exploration.

An open question remains whether AFA levels, within either the normal or the elevated ranges, can independently predict the development of RA,
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects' Outcomes</th>
<th>&lt; 0.074 units (&lt; 80 percentile)</th>
<th>0.074 to 0.138 units (80 to 95 percentile)</th>
<th>0.138 + units (95 + percentile)</th>
<th>Total AFA N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>OR</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>OR</td>
<td>(95% CI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Baseline RF in outcomes</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future RA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RF+</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>(0.19-2.91)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RF−</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future CN</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RF+</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>(0.71-5.25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RF−</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Subjects</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RF+</td>
<td>334</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>(0.66-3.12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RF−</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Outcomes in baseline RF</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Baseline RF+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RA</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>(0.12-2.84)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CN</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baseline RF−</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RA</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>(0.77-2.98)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CN</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1.52</td>
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<tr>
<td>All baseline RF</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RA</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>(0.73-2.47)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CN</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1.35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*OR within the data sets are based upon estimates derived from the unmatched cross products method. CN: controls.

among the total study subjects or any of its subgroup categories. Given the significant associations observed with elevated AFA levels, multivariable analyses would be indicated to determine if they can independently predict the development of RA (or any of its subgroups), after adjusting for baseline RF status, intervals from sampling to clinical onset, and other appropriate correlative variables.

The mechanisms of origin of the AFA system are biologically interesting, whether or not these autoantibodies independently predict RA or contribute to its susceptibility. The report of Aho, et al. is a welcome contribution to defining complex relationships in the development of RA, and future analyses will hopefully provide further clarifications and insights.

ALFONSE T. MASI, MD, FRCP, JEAN C. ALDAG, PhD, University of Illinois College of Medicine at Peoria, Peoria, Illinois, USA.

REFERENCES

Drs. Aho, et al reply

To the Editor:

We thank Drs. Masi and Aldag for their interest in our paper. We tried to be concise in writing; our approach would have been different if we had been presenting a paper intended for an epidemiological journal.

We reanalyzed our material with the conditional logistic model by dividing the highest quintile of antiflaggrin antibody (AFA) distribution into the percentiles from 80 to 94 and from 95 to 100, as Masi and Aldag proposed (Table 1). Of note is that we had also analyzed our data both by quintiles and by entering AFA as a continuous variable to test linearity of the relation. We maintain our conclusion that AFA already within "normal" range predicts RA.

In contrast to rheumatoid factor (RF), AFA in our study series did not correlate significantly with age, sex, smoking, or coffee drinking. Adjustments for these and additional variables would of course be technically possible but we might face problems concerning statistical power and the true significance of the findings. Although there was a close correlation between AFA and RF, the linear relation between baseline AFA and risk of RF positive RA remained statistically significant after adjustment for baseline RF status (p = 0.02), but not after adjustment for Waeber-Rose titer (p = 0.11). One problem in the current study was the lack of RF values covering the whole range. In our earlier series of patients with recent onset arthritis a proportion of RF negative but AFA positive nonerosive cases devel-
opened an erosive disease in due course. Nevertheless, whether AFA has any independent role remains an open question, as Meas and Aldeg state.

We would like finally to point out that our study was on Finnish patients with RA. Much information is available on RF but data concerning the occurrence of other marker antibodies of RA are from a rather limited geographical area. According to a number of studies, anti-RA 33 is present in some 30–40% of Central European patients with RA. Yet in a recent study this antibody proved to be virtually absent in a large patient series collected from the Bethesda area in the United States. Thus, much additional information is needed on the occurrence of marker antibodies of RA.

KIMMO AHO, MD; TIMO PALOSUO, MD; MARKKU HELIÖVAA, MD; PAUL KNEKT, PhD; PIIRKA ALHA, MD, National Public Health Institute, Helsinki, Finland; ROBERT VON ESSEN, MD, Sunderby Hospital, Luleå, Sweden.

REFERENCES

Temporal Arteritis Associated with Chlamydia pneumoniae DNA Detected in an Artery Specimen
To the Editor:

We read with interest the case report by Rimenti, et al1 on temporal arteritis associated with Chlamydia pneumoniae. The authors suggest a possible association between C. pneumoniae infection and giant cell arteritis (GCA). Using a touchdown polymerase chain reaction (PCR) technique on a paraffin embedded temporal artery with GCA, they detected DNA from C. pneumoniae. To our knowledge the first report suggesting C. pneumoniae to play a pathogenetic role in temporal arteritis using the PCR technique was by Wagner, et al 2 at the annual meeting of the American College of Rheumatology in 1998. In their study examining paraffin embedded temporal artery biopsies using both immunohistochemistry and PCR technique, C. pneumoniae was detected in 7 of the 9 examined patients with GCA.

In our own study examining 20 paraffin embedded temporal arteries with proven vasculitis in the artery (giant cells present in 12 biopsies) using a sensitive PCR technique, C. pneumoniae could not be detected in any of the examined biopsies. The patients in our study were recruited from an area with the highest incidence of temporal arteritis reported worldwide and IgG antibodies against C. pneumoniae are frequently found in the Norwegian population. C. pneumoniae has been suggested to play a pathogenetic role in other autoimmune diseases like reactive arthritis and multiple sclerosis (MS). In the latter contradictory results have also been reported. As in the present discussion rather convincing primary data on the role of C. pneumoniae in the pathogenesis of MS was published. However, in other studies the results could not be confirmed. This may reflect the lack of standardization of methods used to diagnose C. pneumoniae infections or differences in epidemiology.

The poor correlation between serological results, culture, and PCR for diagnosis of this agent in respiratory infections has been documented by Verkooyen, et al. In their case report Rimenti, et al used a PCR method described by Blasi, et al. The very high number of cycles (40 plus 55) may yield unspecific PCR products at the same size as the specific amplicons, and the specificity should therefore be proved by probing or sequencing. We have tried this method, and experienced that some respiratory specimens can yield an apparently positive band on the gel, but are negative by retesting using other primers and probes. Infection caused by C. pneumoniae is common, and the rise in specific IgG titer by microimmunofluorescence may have been coincidental. Further, the authors do not present any immunohistochemical investigations with monoclonal antibodies that could support their findings.

The results of studies examining the etiologic role of microbes should be interpreted with great care until the findings are confirmed in other studies.

Our finding stands in a sharp contrast to the case report by Rimenti, et al and the study by Wagner, et al. We are therefore not convinced that C. pneumoniae has a pathogenetic role in temporal arteritis. Further research in this field is needed before any conclusions can be made.

Department of Rheumatology, Vest-Agder Central Hospital, 4604 Kristiansand, S, Norway.

REFERENCES
3. Haugeberg G, Bie R, Nordbo SA. Chlamydia pneumoniae not detected in temporal artery biopsies from patients with temporal...
REFERENCES


Incidence of Elbow Involvement in Rheumatoid Arthritis

To the Editor:

As I have always considered elbow flexion contracture a pathognomonic and diagnostic feature of rheumatoid arthritis, I read the recent prospective 15 year endpoint study with great interest. While it focuses chiefly on the erosive lesions of the bones, the paper yields insights into the progression of joint involvement at the elbow. However, I was disappointed to find no mention of concomitant soft tissue changes; in particular, the lesions described by Lehtinen and co-authors lend themselves to the development of antecubital cysts, corollaries to the popliteal cysts of the knee. Were these looked for, found, recorded, or treated?

GEORGE E. EHRLICH, MD, University of Pennsylvania and NYU, Philadelphia, PA, USA.

REFERENCES


Drs. Lehtinen, et al reply

To the Editor:

The study is based on the Heinola Follow-up Survey of Arthritis and the prospectively followed cohort of rheumatoid patients in which only radiographic changes are evaluated. Unfortunately no detailed data on soft tissue changes or the range of motion exist. No excisions of antecubital cysts were recorded in patient documents in this series. According to our clinical experience antecubital cysts occur occasionally and some of these are excised separately by elbow synovectomy. In elbow replacement, cysts are usually left undisturbed unless careful synovectomy is performed as a part of the procedure. In the course of elbow destruction, flexion contracture occurs regularly, except in some totally damaged and unstable elbows.

JANNE T. LEHTINEN, MD, Harvard Shoulder Service, Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston, MA, USA; EERO A. BELT, MD, MIKKO IKAVALKO, MD, Rheumatism Foundation Hospital, Heinola, Finland.

Correspondence

Francesco Blasi, MD, PhD; Giovanni Rimenti, MD; Roberto Comitini, MD; Oswald Molin, MD; Raffaele Pristona, MD; Paolo Tassini, MD; Claudio Vedoellvi, MD; Peter Mian, MD.
The Use of Botulinum Toxin-A in the Treatment of Patients with Fibromyalgia

To the Editor:

Botulinum toxin-A (BTX-A), one of 3 subtypes of the toxin produced by Clostridium botulinum, causes weakness or paralysis of skeletal muscle. It blocks the release of acetylcholine from motor nerve endings. Although its main effect is on the motor neuron function, it may also affect gamma motor neurones, resulting in lowering of resting muscle tone, thus alleviating spasm

Although long used by neurologists primarily for the treatment of blepharospasm2, spasmodic torticollis3, and strabismus4, for which its use has been approved in the USA, it is also used extensively by plastic surgeons for the treatment of facial lines (wrinkles).

Recently several publications have documented its efficacy in whiplash injury associated with neck pain5 and cervicogenic headache6, and investigators have even extrapolated its use to the treatment of tension-type headaches7 as well as myofascial pain syndromes8. Following on the publication of the recent pilot study by Freund and Schwartz9, we describe our initial experience with BTX-A in the treatment of patients with fibromyalgia (FM) “trigger points” who have been resistant to other forms of local and systemic therapy for this ailment.

The resistant patients we have treated with BTX-A injections into local “trigger points” all had the following characteristics: They either did not respond, or responded for only one to 2 days following local lidocaine injections into these “trigger” points. They often experienced enhanced pain following these injections. They frequently stated that they had to spend at least 24 hours in bed following these injections because of “side effects.” FM had been present for up to 10 to 15 years. They all had numerous FM “trigger” points affecting the cervical area, upper shoulders, borders of the scapulae, and lower back, as well as medial aspect of knees (these often predominated).

Sixteen patients were included in the study. Five had one course, 7 had 2 courses, 3 had 3 courses, and one had 4 courses of BTX-A therapy. Repeated courses were given within one to 2 months when “trigger” points at the initial injection session were too numerous to inject at one time.

In several patients, pain intensified in areas that had not been injected, or new “trigger” points appeared in areas previously unaffected, requiring repeated courses. Relief from symptoms after BTX-A injections lasted a minimum of 16 weeks, in all patients.

No patient was injected with more than 100 U (diluted in 10 cc saline) at any one time, thus limiting possible side effects from the medication.

It is concluded that BTX-A injections into FM “trigger” points offer more prolonged relief without any discernible side effects in a “pilot” study in 16 patients and is superior to local saline or anesthetic injections. Its use is limited by the cost of treatment and, in the USA, by lack of US Food and Drug Administration approval for its use in fibromyalgia. This should be remedied.

RONALD A. ASHERSON, MD, FACP, FCP(SA), FRCP, FACR, University of Cape Town, Cape Town; LYNDON PASCOE, RN, the Rosebank Clinic, Johannesburg, South Africa.

REFERENCES

Dr. Freund replies
To the Editor:

I read with interest the experiences reported by Asherson and Pascoe. Patients with fibromyalgia (FM), as noted by the authors, are difficult to treat. The specific pathology of this condition is elusive and the patients are often complex, presenting with several chronic pain conditions. Commonly these include chronic tension headache, neck pain, temporomandibular and back pain. As pointed out, these latter conditions are also responsive to botulinum toxin-A (BTX-A) and may, as in Asherson and Pascoe's patients, require more than one set of injections to control the pain. This technique of reinjecting patients in a short time frame has raised concerns about antibody production and the eventual immunity of patients to a potentially effective method of controlling chronic pain conditions. At this time there is little evidence that the new low protein formulations induce high antibody titers in the doses used in non-specificity applications.

As BTX-A has shown clinical effectiveness in a number of seemingly unrelated non-specific painful conditions such as FM, skeptics have argued that the effect of the toxin is primarily psychological, since its accepted primary mechanism of action is to relax muscle. However, new animal work using rat jaw joint, rat paw, and guinea pig cornea has shown that BTX-A can effectively inhibit second phase inflammatory responses in those provocation model systems. Evidence is also accumulating from clinical work by ourselves and others that BTX-A is efficacious in obtunding neurogenic inflammation. This is significant for 2 reasons, one that botulinum toxins appear to have pharmacologic properties that are far from fully understood. The second is that many clinically defined painful conditions such as FM may have an underlying common pathology, which these toxins can modify. This makes BTX-A a useful therapeutic tool as well as a possible diagnostic tool. I agree with Asherson and Pascoe that further work defining the role of BTX-A in FM is warranted and should be encouraged.

BRIAN J. FREUND, DDS, MD, FRCD(C), Pickering, Ontario, Canada.

Tolosa-Hunt Syndrome Mimicking Giant Cell Arteritis
To the Editor:

Tolosa-Hunt syndrome is a rare disorder consisting of unilateral orbital and facial pain and multiple cranial neuritis on the same side as the pain.
The erythrocyte sedimentation rate (ESR) is elevated in about 45% of cases. Pain decreases promptly and dramatically in response to glucocorticoid therapy. We bring this entity to the attention of rheumatologists because it shares some characteristics with giant cell arteritis.

A 70-year-old man was evaluated for nasal congestion, right ear ache, right side headache, and numbness on the right side of his neck. Examination by an otolaryngologist, an audiogram, and a computerized tomography (CT) scan of the neck were normal. One year later, he reported sharp and boring episodic facial pain and a sensation resembling pinspricks over the right scalp. Neurological examination and CT scans of the brain and the base of the skull were normal. He then developed palsy of the right 5th, 7th, and 12th cranial nerves. ESR was 48 mm/h (normal 0–15) and a magnetic resonance image (MRI) study showed moderate cerebral atrophy. Reevaluation by a neurologist showed no cranial nerve palsies. Serial ESR values over the following 4 months were 95, 72, 67, and 56 mm/h. There was no evidence of giant cell arteritis in a temporal artery biopsy. A second MRI of the brain was interpreted as showing moderate cortical atrophy.

In 1999, a 3rd neurological examination showed decreased sensation in the distribution of the right 5th cranial nerve and diminished right corneal reflex. ESR values were 98 and 85 mm/h, and right 6th cranial nerve palsy appeared. One month later, he complained of diplopia and right side headache, right side orbital and facial pain, decreased taste, and drooping from the right side of the mouth. Abduction of the right eye was impaired and sensation was diminished in the distribution of the ophthalmic and maxillary divisions of the right 5th cranial nerve. He had right 7th cranial nerve palsy and the tongue was deviated to the right. A tentative diagnosis of Tolosa-Hunt syndrome was made on the basis of periorbital pain, the episodic nature of the disease, involvement of multiple cranial nerves on the same side as the pain, and imaging studies that did not show an intracranial lesion as a cause of his symptoms. Treatment was started with prednisone, 60 mg/day. Two weeks later the pain had resolved almost completely. After 5 weeks of treatment, the 5th and 7th cranial nerve palsies had resolved, but the 6th cranial nerve palsy remained. Retrospective review of pretreatment MRI studies showed subtle changes consistent with inflammation in the superior aspect of the right side of the cavernous sinus (Figure 1).

Tolosa-Hunt syndrome is characterized by painful ophthalmoplegia due to granulomatous inflammation involving the cavernous sinuses and superior orbital fissure. In 1954, Tolosa described painful left ophthalmoplegia in a patient with paralysis of the left 3rd, 4th, and 6th cranial nerves. Angiography showed narrowing of the carotid siphon just distal to the cavernous sinus. At necropsy, the intracavernous portion of the left carotid artery and the adjacent carotid sinuses were surrounded by a cuff of non-specific granulation tissue including the adjoining nervous trunks. Hunt et al. reported 3 additional cases in which remitting and relapsing pain and ophthalmoplegia were believed to result from an inflammatory lesion of the cavernous sinus. One of these cases remitted spontaneously and the other 2 responded to treatment with oral prednisone. In 1996, Smith and Taxali described 5 additional cases and introduced the eponym Tolosa-Hunt syndrome for the triad of unilateral periorbital pain, accompanying cranial nerve palsies, and dramatic response to systemic corticosteroids. The International Headache Society defined diagnostic criteria for the Tolosa-Hunt syndrome: (1) Episode or episodes of unilateral orbital pain for an average of 8 weeks if untreated; (2) Association with paralysis of one or more of 3rd, 4th, and 6th cranial nerves that may coincide with the onset of the pain or follow it by a period of up to 2 weeks; (3) Pain relieved within 72 hours after initiation of corticosteroid therapy; (4) Exclusion of other causes by neuroimaging (and not compulsory) carotid angiography. Some cases may have additional involvement of the 2nd, 5th, 7th, or 8th cranial nerves.

The classic angiographic finding in Tolosa-Hunt syndrome was segmental narrowing in the intracavernous carotid artery, thought to represent inflammatory changes in the space between the carotid artery and adjacent nerves. Six of 7 patients in the series of Miwa, et al. had poor filling of the cavernous sinus with orbital venography. CT scans and MRI studies showed asymmetric shape of the cavernous sinus in about one-half of patients. Goto, et al. reported unremarkable CT scans in 2 of 3 affected patients. In all 3 cases, however, T1 and intermediate weighted MRI revealed an abnormal soft tissue area with intermediate signal intensity in the cavernous sinus. The abnormal areas became smaller and in 2 cases, the signal intensity dropped after corticosteroid treatment.

Tolosa-Hunt syndrome has a wide differential diagnosis. It may be difficult to differentiate cranial pain in Tolosa-Hunt syndrome from giant cell arteritis if Tolosa-Hunt pain occurs before cranial nerve involvement. On the other hand, eye pain, diplopia, and oculomotor disorders are rare in giant cell arteritis. Tolosa-Hunt syndrome should be considered in a case

Figure 1. Coronal views from the second brain MRI (April 1999) show changes consistent with inflammation in the right side of the cavernous sinus. A. T2 weighted sequence with gadolinium contrast. On the left side of the brain, white arrow points to the cavern trigeminales (trigeminal cave of Meckel), a cribiform recess between the endosteal and meningeal dural layers in the middle cranial fossa. This area is normal and is filled with cerebrospinal fluid, which is white. The corresponding area on the opposite side of the brain shows changes consistent with an inflammatory process. There is no cerebrospinal fluid in the right cavern trigeminales. B. T1 weighted sequence with gadolinium contrast. The abnormal cavern trigeminales on the right side of the brain shows enhancement with gadolinium contrast (black arrow) indicating abnormal tissue. The high signal intensity is consistent with inflammation. This lesion is not seen on the normal left side of the brain.
with recurring and remitting cranial pain, especially if pain is localized to the orbit and associated with cranial neuropathy. A negative temporal artery biopsy, failure to observe a space-occupying brain lesion, imaging studies that show narrowing in the intracerebral carotid artery or evidence of soft tissue inflammation in the cavernous sinus, and prompt response of pain to corticosteroids support the diagnosis of Tolosa-Hunt syndrome.

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REFERENCES

Effect of Antimalarial Agents on Fasting Lipid Profile in Systemic Lupus Erythematosus

To the Editor:

We were interested to read the report by Dr. Tam and colleagues1. We reported this effect in RA in 1997, and given the premature cardiovascular morbidity seen in patients with RA, as well as that occurring in the SLE population, this effect is potentially valuable2.

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REFERENCES
Rheumatoid Arthritis. New Frontiers in Pathogenesis and Treatment

This is the first comprehensive text dedicated to rheumatoid arthritis (RA) encompassing topics ranging from basic to clinical science and therapeutic. The 77 contributors provide an understanding of the genetics, immunopathogenesis and epidemiology of RA, pertinent clinical trial design, physical manifestations, and current therapies of rheumatoid disease. In the last 4 of the 44 chapters the authors also review the latest concepts in anticytokine therapies and future targets of therapy.

The text is divided into 7 sections. Section 1 outlines perspectives on the genetics and possible infectious agents that may play a role in the pathogenesis of RA. The chapter on experimental models provides an excellent overview of the strength and limitations of various animal models of inflammatory arthritis. Section 2, which constitutes the bulk of the text, reviews cellular and molecular mechanisms of inflammation, including the role of adhesion molecules in cell migration, cytokine networks, apoptosis, and rheumatoid factors in mediating the inflammatory response.

Sections 3 to 6 address the clinical manifestations of RA including imaging modalities, DMARD therapy, non-drug therapies, and surgical interventions. They also explore the role of the neuroendocrine axis in this disease.

The final section is entitled "Frontiers in Therapy." It outlines the requirements of appropriate clinical trial design. Each subsequent chapter is dedicated to the specific targets of cytokines, T-lymphocytes, macrophages, matrix metalloproteinases, and small molecule inhibitors of signal transduction. These chapters provide a current review of the status and limitations of therapeutic agents in development.

This text is well written and easily understood. It serves as a sound resource for clinician and scientist alike, and will be a valuable addition to the library of those interested in enhancing their understanding of RA. Future editions are welcomed to maintain a current perspective in this rapidly expanding field of rheumatology.

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Atlas of Pain Management Injection Techniques
Steven D. Waldman, MD, JD, Philadelphia: W.B. Saunders Company, March 2000, 400 pages, price $140.00 US.

Beautifully illustrated, methodically and simply organized and presented, this atlas will prove to be a very useful tool for the management of musculoskeletal pain for the neophyte and the accomplished. The author reviews the indications and clinical considerations, the pathophysiology and functional anatomy, the step-by-step injection technique, side effects and complications and "clinical pearls" for each site under consideration. Missing, however, is an introduction with general principles such as preparation of the skin, size of syringe and needle, amount and kind of local anesthetic, amount and kind of corticosteroid, and the justification for use of corticosteroid when performing nerve blocks. Experienced physicians prefer to
mark the injection site with a finger nail and use proper skin preparation and not use gloves rather than find the proper injection site with the gloved finger, as recommended here. The author uses 40 mg methylprednisolone for most sites including large joints such as the hip and tiny joints such as the finger or toe interphalangeal joints. Missing is a discussion of the use of other frequently used corticosteroids and the incompatibility of some with local anesthetics. The local anesthetic of choice seems to be 0.25% preservative-free bupivacaine or occasionally 0.5% preservative-free lidocaine. The author mixes the anesthetic and corticosteroid together and does not discuss the merits of going to the site, i.e., nerve or tendon sheath or joint with local only, removing the syringe, leaving the needle in place, and then mixing the remaining local with steroid for the final injection. Missing is a mention of the side effects of corticosteroid such as depigmentation of skin, especially in dark skinned people, 24–48 hour worsening of diabetes, and rare systemic side effects. The inclusion of Relative Value Guides and billing codes for each injection technique as an aid to billing are of value only in the United States.

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