

Determination of the immunological status of patients with dermatophytosis with special reference to cell mediated immunity.

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This study was initiated to determine the part played by cell mediated immunity in patients with dermatophyte infections. Three groups of individuals were studied. A "control" group, "acute" group identified as having dermatophyte infections for less than six months and a "chronic" group of 15 individuals having dermatophyte infections of over six months. The acute and chronic patient groups had the dermatophytes identified by the standard method of culture. *Trichophyton rubrum*, the commonest dermatophyte isolated in the mycology laboratories and which caused chronic infections, was isolated in all the patients who had dermatophyte infections of more than six months duration. The absolute CD4 cell count was low in the chronically infected group. The E-rosettes are formed by all T-lymphocytes with CD2 makers. A low T-lymphocyte count in turn lowers the cell mediated immunity leading to persistence of the infection in the chronically infected patients. In this study the chronically infected group showed a higher rate of tuberculin negativity indicating a lowered cell mediated immunity, giving rise to a persistence of the infection. These findings suggest that the patients who had chronic dermatophyte infections were having lowered cell mediated immunity which is consistent with the findings of previous studies.