

CRYPTOSPORIDIUM: ULTRASTRUCTURAL EXAMINATION OF JEJUNAL BIOPSY

(Received 15 March, 1996)

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ABSTRACT

The present case report describes a 6-year-old boy with cellular immunodeficiency who developed cryptosporidiosis of the jejunum. The patient had been admitted to the hospital with abdominal pain, diarrhea, nausea, jaundice and respiratory disorders. Pathological work-up of the intestinal biopsy revealed cryptosporidiosis, which was confirmed by transmission (TEM) and scanning electron microscopic (SEM) examinations.

Both the SEM and TEM examinations showed that a large number of cryptosporidia were loosely attached to the brush border of intestinal cells. The extracytoplasmic membrane - bounded microorganisms were shown to inhibit the microvillar structure at the attachment zone of the epithelial cells of the intestines. In addition to this usual localization, a second type of localization of parasite was also identified deep within the cytoplasm of the intestinal cells.

In chronic diarrhea of unknown origin, the examination of jejunal biopsy material is also an important investigational tool as shown in this study. Despite the presence of chronic diarrhea, there was no obvious alteration in the histological architecture of the jejunum but we were able to detect the presence of the parasite in the biopsy material in two different localizations. To confirm the pathologic findings, a high resolution microscopic technique can be used. It is a sensitive technique both for providing evidence for the presence of the infection and detecting the localization of the parasite, especially at an unusual localization, which could otherwise not have been discovered by routinely available techniques.

Key Words: Cryptosporidiosis, Jejunum, Ultrastructural examination

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study was to visualize the localization of the *Cryptosporidium* in the jejunal biopsies by using a high resolution microscopy technique. *Cryptosporidium* is a protozoon that inhabit at the intestinal mucosal epithelium in a variety of vertebrates including man (1-3). It has been known as a cause of disease in various species of animals (1,4-7). The gastrointestinal tract is the main target for many of the cryptosporidia. This opportunistic intestinal infection caused by cryptosporidia is implicated as a frequent cause of intestinal diseases. The first case of human cryptosporidiosis was described in 1976 by Meisel et al. (8). Cryptosporidia may cause self limited illness in normal adults (9), but it is usually a marker of fatal illness in AIDS (10).

CASE REPORT

In september 1995, a 6-year-old boy was admitted to the pediatric department with abdominal pain, diarrhea, nausea, jaundice, respiratory disorders and weight loss of 4 kg. Physical examination and laboratory results revealed a chronic diarrhoea, growth retardation and disseminated molluscum contagiosum infection. By further investigations, cellular immunodeficiency was also detected. Pathological results of jejunal biopsy showed cryptosporidia infection. Because of the increased levels of the hepatic enzymes and the presence of the jaundice, a needle biopsy of the liver was performed and cholangitis was diagnosed at light microscopic level. No cryptosporidia were detected in the biliary tract.

Material and Methods

Jejunal biopsies taken for ultrastructural investigations were fixed in 2.5% cacodylate buffered glutaraldehyde for 18 hours at 4°C. Then the biopsy

materials were prepared separately for transmission (TEM) and scanning (SEM) electron microscopic examinations.

For TEM investigations jejunal tissue pieces were postfixed in cacodylate buffered OsO₄ for one hour at 4°C. After dehydration in ascending series of ethanol, biopsy materials were embedded in Epon 812 resin. Thick sections were taken to specify the mucosal surface of the jejunum, thin sections were then performed, stained with uranyl acetate and lead citrate. The biopsy materials were examined with JEOL 1200 EX II Transmission Electron Microscope.

For SEM investigations the prefixed tissue pieces were dehydrated in ascending series of ethanol, dried in liquid CO₂ in critical point dryer, coated with gold and examined with JEOL 5200 JSM Scanning Electron Microscope.

Results

Light microscopic (LM) investigation revealed small, spherical cryptosporidial organisms, attached to the brush border of epithelial cells. They end-lined the mucosal surface of the jejunum and extended into the intestinal crypts. Jejunal villi were in the normal appearance (Fig.1). Moderate increase in the plasma cells located in the lamina propria was observed.

SEM examinations showed regular intestinal topography. Both the mucosal surface and the villar morphology were found to be intact with smooth appearance. But the mucosal surface was invaded by numerous disc-shaped cryptosporidial microorganisms nested both on the epithelial layer

and the opening of the crypts. The parasites were approximately 3 µm in diameter. (Fig. 2).

Although no free zoites (sporozoite or merozoite) and oocysts were encountered, electron microscopic results commonly revealed cryptosporidia at different developmental stages, being early trophozoites and microgametocytes. Fine structural organization of the early trophozoites consisted of double-layered cell membrane representing the outer envelope and the inner parasite plasma membrane, well developed apical reticular structures, large nucleus and nucleolus. All early forms were identified by their ovoid shapes with a diameter of 3 to 5 µm (Fig. 3a,b).

Ultrastructural examinations showed that, numerous cryptosporidia were loosely attached to the intestinal mucous coat, whereas few were strongly associated with the jejunal epithelial cells. The latter were observed as membrane-bounded microorganisms attached to the epithelial cells and caused important degree of microvilli absence at the attachment site (Fig. 3b).

Some of the cryptosporidia were also found under the microvilli border. Microgametocytes were seen obviously to be infiltrated in the epithelial cell whereas trophozoites were localized at the luminal surface of the epithelial cells. Both the trophozoites and microgametocytes were in a parasitophorous sac. The microgametocytes present in this sac, were identified by the presence of microgametes and some times by the residual bodies in addition to microgametes. (Fig.4).

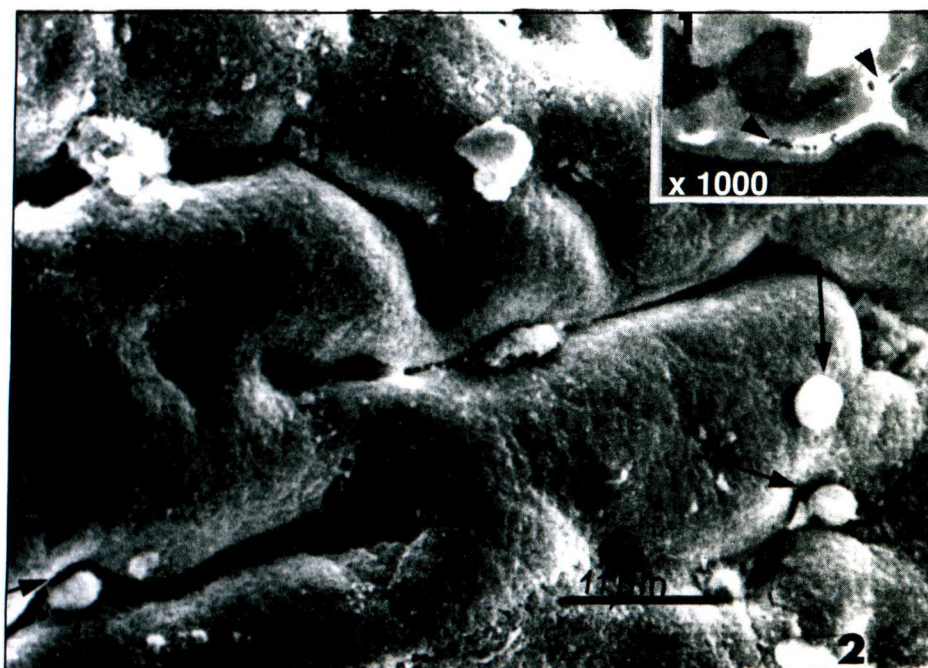


Fig. 1: Cryptosporidiosis shown by light microscope. The cryptosporidia are found near the brush border and in the crypt (▲). Azur - B, X1000

Fig. 2: Scanning electronmicrograph (SEM) showing the spread of cryptosporidia on the intestinal mucosa (↘).

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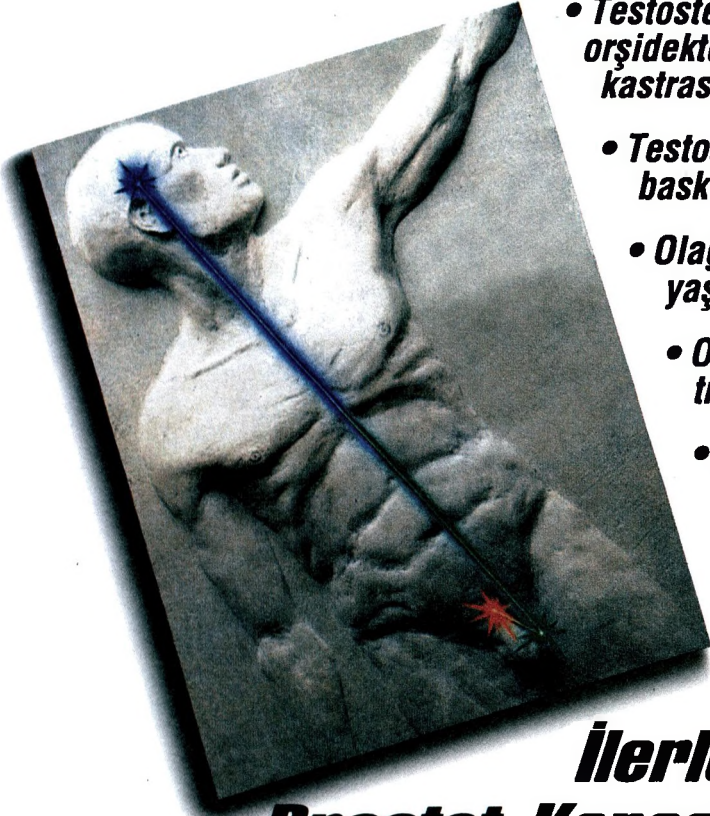
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İlerlemiş Prostat Kanseri Tedavisinde Kanıtlanmış Seçenek



AMERİKA'DA
1 NÜMARA



Leuprolide acetate
FARMAKOKOLJİK ÖZELLİKLERİ: Lucrin Depot, intramusküler veya subkutan enjeksiyon olarak kullanılan leuprolide acetate'in steril lyofilize mikrostercilerinden oluşur. Lucrin Depot'un aktif maddesi olan leuprolide acetate, doğal olarak oluşan gonadotropin serbestleştirici hormonun (GnRH veya LH-RH) sentetik, nonapeptid bir analogudur. Analoğu doğal hormondan daha güçlü bir etki yapar. **KLİNİK FARMAKOLJİ:** Bir GnRH agonisti olan leuprolide acetate, sürekli ve terapötik dozlarda sürekli olarak gonadotropin sekresyonunun güçlü bir inhibitörüdür. İlaç tedavisi kesildiğinde bu etki reversibildir. Leuprolide acetate'in insanlardaki metabolizması, dağılımı ve atılımı tam olarak anlaşılmamıştır. **ENDİKASYONLARI:** Lucrin Depot, ilerlemiş prostat kanserinin paliyatif tedavisinde ve 6 aylık bir süreye kadar uterus myoma ile endometrios tedavisinde etkilidir. **KONTRİNDİKASYONLARI:** Lucrin Depot, leuprolide acetate veya benzeri nonapeptidlere karşı bilinen ağır hassasiyet olan kişilerde kontrendikedir. İzole anaftatik vazolan rapor etmemiştir. Lucrin Depot, hamilelerde veya kısa süreden önce hamile olacak kadınlarda kontrendikedir. **UYARILAR/ÖNLEMLER:** Prostat Kanseri, LH-RH analogları ile tedavinin ilk haftalarında semptom ve işaretlerin kötüleştiği izole vakalar rapor edilmiştir. Vazektomi yapılmış veya örnekte obstrüktif prostat hastaları tedavinin ilk birkaç haftasında yatmadan kalkıp edilmelidir. Leuprolide acetate'a yanıtla testosteron ve asıl fosfolipaz serum düzeyleri düşürülerek izlenmelidir. **Jinekolojik Kullanım:** Tedavinin erken safhalarında, seks steroidleri geçici olarak normal seviyelerin üstüne çıkar. Fertilite bozulması, fertilite hasarlanmasından itibaren reversibl olduğu gösterilmiştir. Hamilelerde Kullanım: Lucrin Depot hamilelerde veya kısa süreden önce hamile olacak olan kadınlarda kullanılmamalıdır. **Emziren Anneler:** Lucrin Depot emziren bir anneye uygulanmamalıdır. **ADVERS ETKİLER:** Vazektomi yapılmış veya örnekte obstrüktif prostat veya hemübüriti hastalarında tedavinin ilk birkaç haftasında semptom ve işaretlerin kötüleşmesi bildirilmiştir. **BEKLENMEYEN BİR ETKİ GÖRÜLDÜĞÜNDE DOKTORUNUZA DANIŞINIZ. KULLANIM ŞEKLİ VE DOZU:** Lyofilize mikrosterciler homojen şekilde suslandırılır ve zayıf lak intramusküler veya subkutan enjeksiyon olarak uygulanır. Her ne kadar ilacı, süzülendirilmeden sonra 24 saat stabl olduğu gösterilmiştir de, ilaç her hangi bir buyuca içermelidir. Enjeksiyon yeri periyodik olarak değerlendirilmelidir. **DOZ AJANI:** Rutin dozda tedavi edilen insan vücudunda 250-500 katının subkutan uygulanması dispoze, aktifite azalması ve enjeksiyon yeriinde lokal iritasyon ile sonuçlanmıştır. Bu yıl boyunca günde 20 mg gibi yüksek dozlarda uygulanan leuprolide acetate ile yapılan daha önceki klinik çalışmalarda, bu doz günde 1 mg ile günden fazla bir yan etkiye neden olmamıştır. **SARILAMA KOŞULLARI:** Lucrin Depot flakonu ve çözücü ampulu oda sıcaklığında muhafaza edilmelidir. **TICARİ TAKDİM ŞEKLİ VE AMBALAJ MİHTEVASI:** Lucrin Depot kutusunda: Biyofarmada Kopolimer mikrosterciler içinde 3,75 mg leuprolide acetate içeren bir flakon, çözücü içeren bir ampul ve 220 ilme içeren bir enjektör bulunur. Reçete ile satılır. **Doktor danetimli şekilde kullanılmalıdır.** Geçerli olan ilağın meşakkatli yerlerde ve ambalajında saklanması. **Reçeteli No: 967/Reçeteli Tarihi: 29 Kasım 1994 Reçeteli Sahibi: Abbott Lab. İhr. ve Tic. A.Ş. İmal Yeri: Takeda Chemical Industries Ltd. Japonya da imal edilmektedir. Abbott İspanya da ambalajlanmıştır. Ağırlıkta 1995 tarihli Rihari ile KDY dahil Per. Sat. Fiyatı: 10.400.000 TL.**





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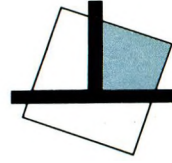
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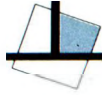


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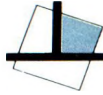
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LIVIAL TABLET: 1 Tablet 2,5 mg. tibolon içerir.

Farmakolojik Özellikler: Tibolon sentetik bir steroiddir. Tibolon klimakterikte over fonksiyonlarının kaybolmasından sonra hipotalamik-hipofizer sistemi stabilize eder. Bu santral etki, tibolon'un hormonal özelliklerinin aşağıdaki etkilerle gösterilen, estrojenik, progestagenik ve zayıf androjenik etkilerinden kaynaklanmaktadır. Tibolon günde 2,5 mg. dozda postmenopozal kadınlarda gonadotropin düzeylerini baskılar ve fertil kadınlarda ovülasyonu inhibe eder. Yine aynı dozda, Tibolon postmenopozal kadınlarda endometriyumda uyarıya neden olmaz. Aynı zamanda vajinal mukozanın uyarıcı etki de görülmüştür. Tibolon'un aynı dozda postmenopozal kemik kaybını inhibe ettiği; menopozal şikayetler, özellikle ateş basması ve terleme gibi vazomotor şikayetleri giderdiği, Libido ve ruh halini olumlu yönde etkilediği gösterilmiştir. **Endikasyonları:** Doğal ve cerrahi menopoz sonrası oluşan şikayetler. **Kontraindikasyonları:** Gebelik veya laktasyon, hormonlara bağlı tümör varlığı veya şüphesi, kardiyovasküler veya serebrovasküler bozukluklar, veya özgeçmişte bunların tanımlanması, etiolojisi bilinmeyen vajinal kanama, ağır karaciğer bozuklukları. **Uyarılar/Önlemler:** Tibolon kontraseptif amaçla kullanılmaz, önerilenden yüksek dozlar vajinal kanamaya neden olabilir. Tibolon son adet kanamasının üzerinden bir yıl (12 ay) geçmeden alınmamalıdır. Bu süre geçmeden alınması düzensiz menstrüel kanama oluşabilir. HRT için başka bir preparattan Tibolon'a geçiliyorsa, endometrium evvelce uyarılmış olabileceğinden, bir progestagen yardımıyla çekilme kanaması induksiyonu önerilir. **Yan etkiler/advers etkiler:** Tibolon'a tahammül iyidir ve tedavi esnasındaki yan etki insidansı düşüktür. Seyrek olarak şu yan etkiler gözlenmiştir: Vücut ağırlığında değişme, baş dönmesi, seboreik dermatöz, vajinal kanama, baş ağrısı, gastrointestinal rahatsızlık, pretibial ödem **İlaç etkileşimleri:** Fenitoin, karbamazepin ve rifampisin gibi enzim induksiyonu yapan ilaçlar Tibolon metabolizmasını hızlandırabilir ve sonuçta aktivitesini düşürebilir. **Kullanım şekli ve dozu:** Tabletler tercihan günün aynı saatinde çiğnenmeden bir miktar sıvı ile yutulmalıdır. Doz günde 1 tablettir ve kesintisiz uzun süre kullanılabilir. Bir kaç hafta içinde semptomlarda düzelmeye görülür, ama optimal sonuçlar tedaviye en az 3 ay devam ettikten sonra alınır. **Takdim şekli ve fiyatı:** 28 tablettik strip içeren kutularda % 15 KDV'li P.S.F. 1.040.000-TL (22/2/1995) **Ruhsat tarihi ve no:** 22/3/1994-166/41 (Retecete ile satılır) Ayrıntılı bilgi için: ORGANON İLAÇLARI A.Ş. PK 432, 34434 Sirkeci-Istanbul

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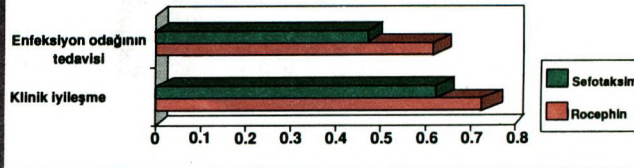
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Referans: Ferencz A, Prlnz G, Szalka A, Ban E. *Chemotherapy* 1989;35 (Suppl 2):5-8

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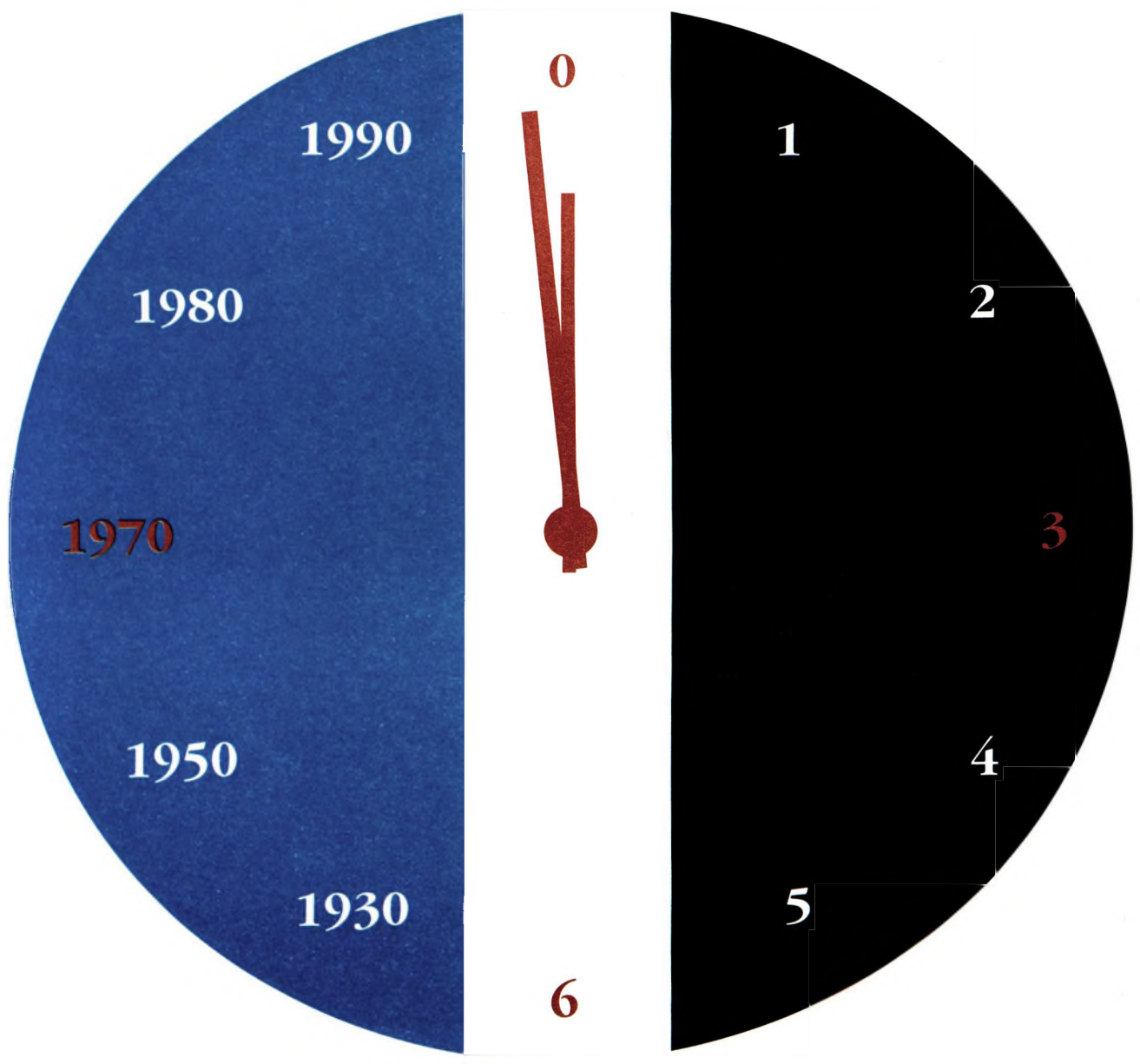
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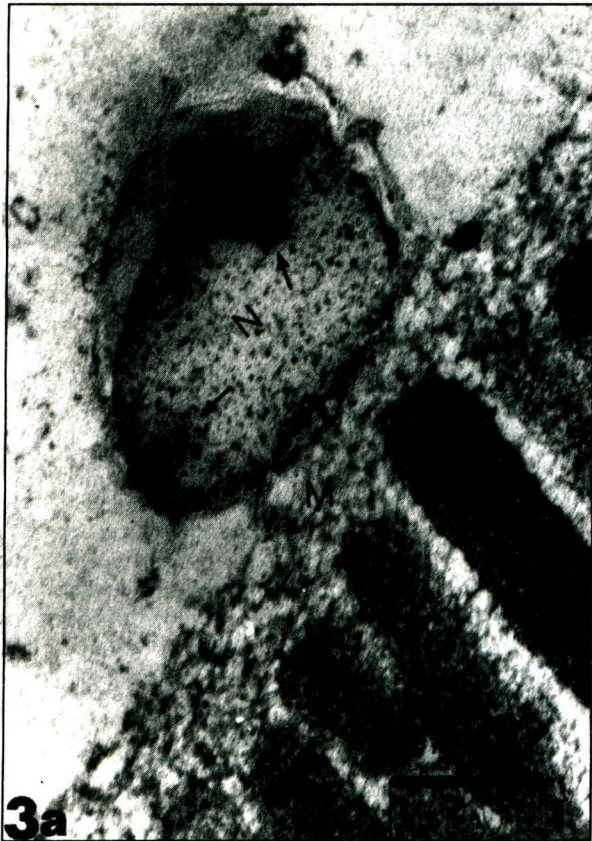


Fig. 3: Transmission electronmicrograph (TEM) of the trophozoit stage of cryptosporidia: **a-** localized on mucous (M) and N: nucleus, (→): nucleolus. **b-** localized on the epithelial surface (e).



Fig. 4: Transmission electronmicrograph (TEM) of the microgametocyte (m) within the epithelial cell.

DISCUSSION

In the present study we have tried to investigate the jejunal biopsy material of an infected child by light, scanning and transmission electron microscopy in terms of *Cryptosporidium* localization.

Several organisms we observed on LM and SEM were free in the lumen of the intestines as noted by others (11, 12). Many organisms were frequently localized on the mucous coat of the intestinal epithelial cells. But the epithelial cells on which the cryptosporidia were tightly attached showed an obvious microvillar atrophy at EM level and this was also observed in many electron microscopic studies (7, 11-16). Although the presence of villar atrophy, flattening on the intestinal surface or epithelial injury is being pointed out in some of the cryptosporidiosis cases (11,12,15,17) our observations revealed no prominent disturbance in the intestinal villus architecture of jejunum as stated before (12,13). We think that this morphological aspect could be related to the moderate amount of cryptosporidia which were tightly attached on the villus epithelium. But it must be noticed that physiological abnormalities such as diarrhoea may be due to villar atrophy at the other intestinal regions of this patient. It may also imply to another clinical manifestation such as cholangitis (17). No satisfactory explanation exists for preferential organ involvement of cryptosporidium, a phenomenon similar to that found in nonhuman hosts (18). One theory suggests that various *Cryptosporidium* species target different anatomic sites, but speciation based on host specificity has been controversial (19). Anatomic distribution of *Cryptosporidium* organisms in the human body has not been well studied, nor have the pathologic consequences been explored. Furthermore, other factors such as, toxin elaboration by cryptosporidia or other organisms may be involved in the pathogenesis of the diarrhoea of this patient.

Cryptosporidia seen in the jejunal lumen were observed surrounded by a two-layered pellicle at the early trophozoite stage of their life cycle. The stages were defined according to the criteria established in other studies where similar morphology was seen (7, 11, 13-15). Cryptosporidial macrogametes with polysaccharide granules and schizont with inner merozoites were not found in the very small punch biopsy specimen in question. As noted, the plasma membrane of the absorptive cell might form the outermost membrane surrounding the organism. It is indicated that the number of membranes enveloping the various phases of cryptosporidia range from one to six (11,15). We could not see neither the detailed layers of the surrounding membrane nor the feeder organelle mentioned of cryptosporidia at the tight attachment sites to the epithelial cells (1,7,13,15,20).

The organism which is inside the absorptive cell cytoplasm is probably at the microgametocyte stage of the life cycle. Even though, the mechanism by which cryptosporidiosis enters the cell is not clearly defined, we can speculate that it could be endocytosed by the luminal absorptive cell or the parasite itself could dissolve the host cell membrane to attain entry into the cell. But clearly defined endothelial cell membrane injury was not found. Our observation about the intracellularly localized *Cryptosporidium* were similar with the findings pointing out the localization of cryptosporidia inside the "M" cells (15) or degenerated *Cryptosporidium* inside the intestinal epithelial cells (13). Concept about intracellular (3,4) and extracellular (20) *Cryptosporidium* localization were widely discussed, where intracellular and extracytoplasmic localization concepts were defined as the same intramicrovillar localization. However we need to point out that the intracellular localizations of parasites within our biopsy material would not be interpreted as an extracytoplasmic localization since in our study they were clearly shown to be localized apically within the host cell's cytoplasm.

Cryptosporidium may cause self limited illness in normal adults (9). But it is usually pathogenic and fatal in AIDS patients (10). Infections has been reported to involve intestine (8, 11, 12, 17, 21-23), stomach (17, 24), biliary tract and gallbladder (17,25), pancreas (26, 27), respiratory tract (23, 26), liver (28), lung (29), appendix (14) of human. The case presented in our study is of special interest being a rare report of cryptosporidiosis case since *Cryptosporidium* is not only a dangerous disease in AIDS, but also a frequent cause of illness in immunocompetent individuals including children and travelers (21).

It is therefore important to examine carefully the endoscopic biopsies of these patients at EM level but unfortunately, the small size of the parasites makes them difficult to be detected in faeces or tissue sections. Electron microscopic observations, in addition to confirming parasitologic techniques used by the pathologists and microbiologists, also tend to expand the knowledge about the relationship between the immunodeficient patient and the parasite of *Cryptosporidium*.

Acknowledgement

We thank Prof. Güner Söyletir, M.D. for valuable discussion.

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