

Serum Beta Lipoprotein Levels in Leprosy

TO THE EDITOR:

Lipids in blood have been investigated in different types of leprosy but the results have not been consistent (⁴). Hepatic involvement by leprosy inflammation has been observed in some types of leprosy (^{1, 2, 5}).

The major plasma lipids are no longer to be considered as individual components like cholesterol or triglycerides but have to be considered as part of the lipoprotein macromolecular complexes. Beta lipoproteins which are mainly produced in the liver can be expected to vary in content or

composition from the normal in view of the hepatic involvement in leprosy. Keeping this in view, a study was made of the fasting serum beta lipoprotein levels in normal individuals and in different types of leprosy. The turbidimetric method of Burstein and Samaille (³) was used. The results are as follows:

Group	No. of cases studied	Turbidimetric units
Normal	13	6.011 ± 1.214
Tuberculoid leprosy	36	5.113 ± 1.614
Lepromatous leprosy	11	5.831 ± 1.576

The difference in the turbidity values found in normal versus tuberculoid leprosy sera was found to be statistically significant ($P=0.05$).

The lepromatous type of leprosy is said to be associated with a greater hepatic involvement than the tuberculoid type. However, in this study, the beta lipoproteins show a significant lowering in the tuberculoid type only. Further work is required to elucidate this apparent discrepancy.

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