

## Response to Letter of Dr. Mathur, *et al.*

TO THE EDITOR:

We are much pleased to learn that Dr. Mathur, *et al.* had different viewpoints and comments regarding our paper, "Preliminary Observation on Langerhans' Cells" (1). After our paper was published in September of 1982, we read some new articles relevant to that topic. Dr. Van Voorhis, *et al.* (3) studied 8 of 21 patients with leprosy (including 10 lepromatous cases, 5 borderline, and 6 tuberculoid) and found increased numbers of OKT6-positive cells in clusters in the epidermis just above the dermal infiltrates. On the other hand, the results in an earlier paper by Dr. Mathur, *et al.* (2) were contrary to our preliminary observation.

From the Letter to the Editor we are happy to learn that Dr. Mathur, *et al.* have done a lot of work on Langerhans' cells in leprosy, which will be very helpful to our further research. Recently we observed Langerhans' cells in seven cases of TT and BT using OKT6. The results were generally similar to that of our previous work, but some results were similar to that of Dr. Van Voorhis. The paper on this experiment will be submitted for publication to the JOURNAL in the near future. Since the number of Langerhans' cells varies between 460–1000 per mm<sup>2</sup> of epidermis in man and there are re-

gional variations in their distribution, the use of an autogeneous control with the epidermis from the same individual and from the same site must be an important factor in the correctness of experiments, and the results obtained using this method would be comparable. However, the common idea that Langerhans' cells are involved in the pathogenesis of leprosy is shared with Dr. Mathur and us.

—Liu Jihe

*Vice-Chief  
Department of Dermatopathology  
Institute of Dermatology  
Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences  
2 Jiankang Road  
Taizhou, Jiangsu  
People's Republic of China*

### REFERENCES

1. LIU, J., SHI, Y., KONG, Q. and YE, G.-Y. Preliminary observation on Langerhans' cells in leprosy. *Int. J. Lepr.* **50** (1982) 316–318.
2. MATHUR, N. K., MANGAL, H. N., MATHUR, D., BEDWAL, R. S. and MATHUR, R. S. Langerhans' cells and leprosy. *Lepr. India* **55** (1983) 22–28.
3. VAN VOORHIS, W. C., KAPLAN, G., SARNO, E. N., HORWITZ, M. A., STEINMAN, R. M., LEVIS, W. R., NOGUEIRA, N., HAIR, L. S., GATTASS, C. R., ARRICK, B. A. and COHN, Z. A. The cutaneous infiltrates of leprosy. *N. Engl. J. Med.* **307** (1982) 1594–1597.