



SYMPOSIUM ON LYMPHOMAS

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LYMPHOMAS IN THE SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC

by

Dr Iyad Chatty*

In the region of Damascus there are approximately 1800 beds in hospitals for general diseases (university, city and private hospitals). There are also 200 beds in maternity hospitals. A review of 2000 consecutive cancer cases were present in the files of the department of pathology where these hospitals refer their biopsies, there were 298 cases of lymphoma between 1 May 1971 and 28 February 1974. Leukaemias were excluded.

Among these 298 cases there were eighty-seven cases of Hodgkin's disease, seventy-five cases of lymphocytic and lymphoblastic lymphomas, twelve pleomorphic lymphomas, thirteen cases of reticulum cell sarcoma, twenty-seven multiple myelomas, sixteen cases of 'Histiocytosis X' and five other rare lymphomatous diseases. There were also seven cases that fulfilled all the clinical and morphological criteria of Burkitt's lymphoma, four of whom are already dead and three are under strict medical attention.

There were also fifty-six cases of primary lymphomas of the bowels, including thirty-one cases of small intestinal lymphomas. Of these thirty-one, there were fourteen cases associated with malabsorption syndrome. Immunological studies were performed in five patients, three of whom showed abnormal pattern with

* Associate Professor of Pathology, Faculty of Medicine,
University of Damascus, Damascus

elevated alpha chains. Electron microscopic studies were performed on biopsies obtained from two of these three patients and showed the neoplastic cells to be plasmacytoid cells with different stages of maturity.

A marked predilection for males was noted in the entire lymphoma group with a general ratio of three males to one female. The ratio holds true for the primary intestinal lymphomas also.

Recently there has been two major editions to the health facilities in the Syrian Arab Republic. First the Institute of Nuclear Medicine and second the Unit of Pathology and Electron Microscopy. Both are government sponsored and are under the direction of the University of Damascus. These two units have enabled us to perform all sorts of sophisticated tests on our patients and start few planned research programmes in the field of cancerology and lymphomas in particular. They have also made it possible for us to follow the great majority of patients closely. We practically have good follow-up on 253 of the 298 patients with lymphomas. We hope that with efficient cooperation and comprehensive guidance and help we can achieve good results in patient care.