

THE MEDICAL-SURGICAL SPLENOPATHIES*

Introduction

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SOME TEN years ago a group of internists, pathologists and surgeons agreed to pool their interests in diseases of the spleen and hematopoietic system and the Combined Spleen Clinic, as it is now called, was started at the Columbia Medical Center. The advantages of seeing patients with such disorders before, during and after the therapy had been agreed to, whether medical, surgical or roentgenological, soon became apparent, and may be summed up under three headings:

1. Advantages to the patients are definite in having a more active concentrated study of their lesions, a more accurate diagnosis, a therapy agreed upon by the group, and lastly a follow-up by the same group to determine the late results as a basis for advice to future patients.
2. Advantages to the members of the Clinic, as clinicians and teachers, are evident in the study of an increasing number of patients and in clarifying their ideas in diagnosis, pathology, therapy and prognosis.
3. The stimulus to clinical and experimental investigation of problems arising in the diagnosis and treatment of patients seen in the Clinic is obvious.

During the past ten years we have seen 1,457 patients with the lesions as classified in Table I. It is obvious that many of these blood and spleen dyscrasias are strictly medical in their therapy, others roentgenological, others surgical, and a fairly definite group where therapy is difficult to advise. The leukemias and primary anemias are studied and cared for on the medical services by Doctors McAlpin and West. The splenomegalies, of known and undetermined etiology, are studied by the combined group.

The organization of the Clinic is of importance and is graphically

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TABLE I
NUMBER OF CASES TO OCTOBER, 1938

Type	Cases	
Hemolytic Jaundice (typical).....	43	30 with splenectomy 13 without "
Hemolytic Jaundice (atypical).....	15	7 with " 8 without "
Normal Splenectomy	30	
Splenomegaly of Undetermined Origin.....	47	43 with " 4 without "
Banti's Syndrome		
(1) Cirrhosis	64	22 with " 42 without "
(2) Schistosomiasis	11	11 with "
(3) Outside Pressure on Splenic Vein.....	3	
(4) Splenic Vein Thrombosis.....	8	3 with " 5 without "
(5) Cavernomatous Transformation of Portal Vein	2	2 with " 0 without "
(6) Stenosis of Portal Vein.....	1	1 with "
(7) Obstructive Factor Undetermined.....	33	22 with " 11 without "
Idio-thrombocytopenic Purpura	42	22 with " 20 without "
Miscellaneous Purpura	49	11 with " 38 without "
Aplastic Anemia	54	
Pernicious Anemia	231	
Secondary Anemia	84	
Sickle Cell Anemia	10	
Miscellaneous Anemias	88	
Eosinophilia	13	
Hemophilia	15	
Infectious Mononucleosis	71	
Acute Leukemia	79	
Chronic Myeloid Leukemia.....	98	
Chronic Lymphatic Leukemia.....	89	
Hodgkin's Disease	141	
Neoplasm	70	
Polycythemia	66	

presented in Chart I. It is to be emphasized that the general practitioner and family physician is the beginning and end of this scheme. It is he who, as a rule, is first consulted and sends the patient for opinion and consultation and it is to him that we try to return the patient and whose co-operation we seek in having the patient return for follow-up studies.

The second feature of this organization that we wish to bring to your attention is the central and essential laboratory for the hematological studies of these patients. Before, during and after the therapy used in the individual case, the blood counts and various blood studies should be done by the same group of carefully trained and experienced hematologists. Unless this is done, the records in the Clinic and the conclusions drawn from the study of the patients will be thoroughly unreliable.

ORGANIZATION SPLEEN CLINIC

COLUMBIA-PRESBYTERIAN MEDICAL CENTER N.Y.C.

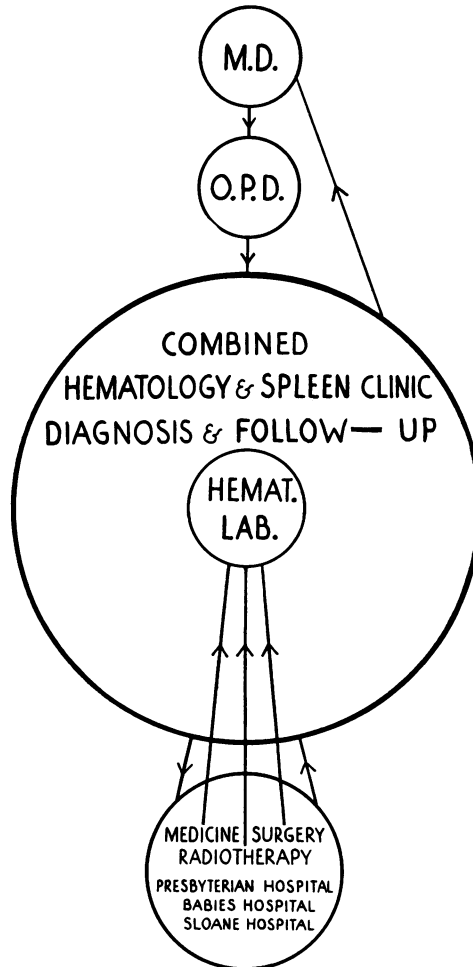


Chart 1

It is the desire of the members of this Clinic to pay tribute to the accurate work and interested co-operation of Miss Katherine Edsall, Miss Mary Whipple, Miss Catherine Illyne and Miss Hazel Maxwell, who have carried on the work in this laboratory.

In conclusion I should like to emphasize that combined clinics in diseases of systems requiring various types of therapy give the best results from the standpoint of therapy, teaching and research.