

References

- LEVER, W. F. (1967) 'Histopathology of the Skin', 4th ed., p. 521. Lippincott, Philadelphia
- WILKINSON, D. S. (1968) 'Diseases of the Perianal and Genital Regions' in 'Textbook of Dermatology', by A. Rook, D. S. Wilkinson, and F. J. G. Ebling, 1st ed., p. 1537. Blackwell Scientific Publications, Oxford
- ZOON, J. J. (1952) *Dermatologica (Basel)*, **105**, 1

Correspondence*Chimpanzee urethral meningococci*

To the Editor of the *British Journal of Venereal Diseases*

SIR—Reports on the isolation of *Neisseria meningitidis* from the cervix (Keys, Hecht, and Chow, 1971), and from the male urethra (Carpenter and Charles, 1942; Volk and Kraus, 1973; Holmes, 1972; Wende, 1972) raise questions as to the source of the meningococci and their isolation from the genital tract. We have recently recorded an observation relating to this subject in chimpanzees.

Our laboratory is currently studying experimental gonococcal urethritis in chimpanzees (Lucas, Chandler, Martin, and Schmale, 1971; Brown, Lucas, and Kuhn, 1972). Cultures were obtained from the nasopharynx, rectum, urethra, and/or cervix of these animals twice weekly. One male chimpanzee has been a chronic nasopharyngeal carrier of meningococci for 52 weeks. This animal frequently engages in self oral-genital contact, and on three occasions, meningococci were isolated from his urethra. Rectal cultures have been continuously negative for meningococci.

The meningococci isolated from the nasopharynx and the urethra both grew well on Thayer-Martin selective medium (Martin, Billings, Hackney, and Thayer, 1967). Both produced acid without gas in glucose and maltose, but were negative in mannitol, lactose, sucrose, and laevulose; both were negative for β -D-galactosidase activity on o-nitrophenyl- β -D-galactopyranoside (ONPG), and neither could be grouped.

Balanite chronique à plasmocytes de Zoon.**Exposé de deux cas**

Les caractères cliniques et histopathologiques de deux cas de balanite à plasmocytes chronique de Zoon sont décrites. Cette entité doit prendre place dans le diagnostic différentiel des plaies chroniques de la verge.

These findings are compatible with the hypothesis that the urethral and nasopharyngeal meningococci could be the same organism, and implies that nasopharyngeal meningococci were transmitted to the genital tract by fellatio.

Yours faithfully,

W. JERRY BROWN, S. J. KRAUS, AND R. J. ARKO

VENEREAL DISEASE RESEARCH UNIT,
CENTER FOR DISEASE CONTROL,
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE,
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30333, U.S.A.
July, 1972

References

- BROWN, W. J., LUCAS, C. T., and KUHN, U. S. G. (1972) *Brit. J. Vener. Dis.*, **48**, 177
- CARPENTER, C. M., and CHARLES, R. (1942) *Amer. J. publ. Hlth*, **32**, 640
- HOLMES, K. K. (1972) Personal communication
- LUCAS, C. T., CHANDLER, F., MARTIN, J. E., and SCHMALE, J. D. (1971) *J. Amer. med. Ass.*, **216**, 1612
- KEYS, T. F., HECHT, R. H., and CHOW, A. W. (1971) *New Engl. J. Med.*, **285**, 505
- MARTIN, J. E., BILLINGS, T. E., HACKNEY, J. F., and THAYER, J. D. (1967) *Publ. Hlth Rep. (Wash.)*, **82**, 361
- VOLK, J., and KRAUS, S. J. (1973) To be published
- WENDE, R. D. (1972) Personal communication