

Immunology

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Diagnosis and classification of autoimmune hepatitis

Autoimmune hepatitis is a rare disease of low prevalence that is associated with diagnostic autoantibodies. These autoantibodies are useful disease markers that facilitate the early diagnosis of autoimmune hepatitis for therapeutic intervention to prevent progression to liver cirrhosis and associated complications. Adult onset type-1 autoimmune hepatitis is associated with F-actin reactive smooth muscle SMA-T or SMA-G autoantibody, antinuclear autoantibody in 60% of patients and autoantibody to SLA/LP in 15-20%. Juvenile onset type-2 autoimmune hepatitis is associated with LKM-1 and LC-1 autoantibodies. Liver autoantibodies in asymptomatic patients with normal liver function may precede the subsequent development of overt autoimmune liver disease. For routine diagnostic immunology laboratories, initial screening for smooth muscle SMA-T antibody by immunofluorescence remains the method of choice with confirmation for reactivity with F-actin by immunofluorescence.

Biography

Ban-Hock Toh has graduated with MBBS degree from University of Singapore (1965), FRACP (1975), FRCPA (1975), PhD (1977) and DSc (1986) from Monash University. He Heads the Autoimmunity Laboratory, Centre for Inflammatory Diseases, Department of Medicine, Monash University Faculty of Medicine and the Diagnostic Immunology Laboratory of Australian Clinical Laboratories, Clayton, Victoria. He has held positions as Head, Department of Immunology, Monash University (1995-2005) and was Chief Examiner in Immunology for the FRCPA (1995-2000). He has published 272 peer-reviewed papers and 21 book chapters. He is currently engaged in studies directed towards understanding the immunopathology of atherosclerosis, based upon his extensive experience in the immunopathology of autoimmune gastritis and pernicious anemia, autoimmune hepatitis and the molecular biology of early endosomes.

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