CHROMOSOMAL ABERRATIONS IN PERIPHERAL BLOOD LYMPHOCYTES FROM PATIENTS WITH CHRONIC HEPATITIS UNTREATED AND TREATED WITH AZATHIOPRINE

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Chromosomal studies were carried out on peripheral blood lymphocytes from 150 patients with chronic hepatitis untreated and treated with azathioprine and from 20 healthy (utilized as controls) persons. The

analysis of metaphases showed an increase very significative of the chromosomal aberrations frequency in the patients with chronic hepatitis untreated and treated with azathioprine, as compared to controls, for all the types of numerical (hyperdiploidies, hypodiploidies, polyploidies and endoreduplications) and structural (gaps, breaks, acentric fragments, chromosomal exchanges and diffuse chromosomal anomalies) aberrations. The incidence of chromosomal aberrations in the group of patients treated with azathioprinewas significantly higher than in the group of untreated patients. More "severe" chromosomal aberrations (ring chromosomes, dicentrics, exchanges-translocations, triradials, quadriradials, diffuse chromosomal anomalies) were noticed in the patients treated with this immunossupressive drug than in the untreated patients. Is discussed the possibility to use the chromosomal aberrations as elements of diagnosis in the chronic hepatitis, on the one hand, and as elements of prognosis in the evolution of a chronic hepatitis to hepatic cancer, on the other hand, especially in the case of the patients treated with azathioprine.