

# HEMATOLOGICAL CHANGES IN TUBERCULOUS SPONDYLITIS PATIENTS AT THE HOSPITAL UNIVERSITI SAINS MALAYSIA

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**Abstract.** In this study, we compared the platelet count with erythrocyte sedimentation rates (ESR) in patients with tuberculous spondylitis to evaluate the correlation. This was a retrospective 3-year study covering January 2004 to December 2006 at the Hospital Universiti Sains Malaysia. Platelet counts, hemoglobin levels, ESR, peripheral blood counts and peripheral blood smears on 17 patients with tuberculous spondylitis were obtained. The ages of the patients ranged from 20 to 70 years old. The male to female ratio was 3.2:1. The majority of the patients were anemic (88.2%) and 52.9% of the patients had thrombocytosis. All the patients had normal lymphocyte counts and a high in ESR at diagnosis. There was a linear correlation between the platelet count and ESR ( $r = 0.60$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). The platelet count was also significantly correlated with the hemoglobin level ( $r = -0.6$ ,  $p < 0.02$ ). The degree of thrombocytosis was related to the degree of inflammation measured by the ESR. Thrombocytosis also correlated with the hemoglobin level. We suggest that evaluating hematological values in suspected cases of tuberculosis should be considered. The presence of hematological changes should raise the suspicion of tuberculosis in spondylitis patients.

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