

Our study was essentially a quantitative assessment of suppressor cell function, prompted by reports of impaired function which might, in some way, allow a sequence of events terminating in congestive cardiac failure.<sup>1,2</sup> We have previously reported a quantitative study of T cell populations in three groups: eight patients with congestive cardiomyopathy, eight patients with heart failure caused by coronary disease, and eight normal controls.<sup>3</sup> There was no significant difference in the ratio of helper/suppressor cells between the groups, although there was a tendency for both heart failure groups to have higher ratios. This was due to both an increase in helper cells and a decrease in suppressor cells in both patient groups, but none of these differences was significant. These results suggested to us that any defect of suppressor cells must lie in abnormal function rather than in reduced numbers but we have failed to demonstrate a specific abnormality of suppressor cell function in the heart failure of congestive cardiomyopathy. We agree with Sanderson, however, that an immunological abnormality may be transient and detectable only in the early stage of congestive cardiomyopathy. All of our

patients in both studies had been known to have congestive cardiomyopathy for more than three months.

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#### References

- 1 Fowles RE, Bieber CP, Stinson EB. Defective in vitro suppressor cell function in idiopathic congestive cardiomyopathy. *Circulation* 1979;59:483-91.
- 2 Eckstein R, Mempel W, Bolte HD. Reduced suppressor cell activity in congestive cardiomyopathy and in myocarditis. *Circulation* 1982;65:1224-9.
- 3 Lowry PJ, Thompson RA, Littler WA. Cellular immunity in congestive cardiomyopathy: the normal cellular immune response. *Br Heart J* 1985;53:394-9.

## Notices

### British Cardiac Society

The Annual General Meeting for 1988 will take place in Belfast on 23 and 24 March 1988, and the closing date for receipt of abstracts was 4 January 1988.

### Cardiovascular intervention

A workshop on coronary angioplasty and other related procedures will be held at the London Hospital on 28 and 29 April 1988. Inquiries to Dr M T Rothman, The London Hospital, London E1 1BB.

### Pacing and electrophysiology

The annual scientific meeting of the North American Society of Pacing and Electrophysiology will take place in Los Angeles on 12 to 14 May 1988. Inquiries to NASPE, 13 Eaton Court, Wellesley Hills, MA 02181, USA.

## Correction

Ventricular defibrillation: the Belfast experience. *G W N Dalzell, S R Cunningham, C M Wilson, J D Allen, J Anderson, A A J Adgey*—We regret that two errors were introduced into this article published in the November issue (volume 58: pages 441-6). On page 442 the second sentence of the section entitled "Prognosis of patients in ventricular fibrillation" should have read "When ventricular fibrillation occurred *less* than four hours after the onset of symptoms (these were mainly patients with acute myocardial infarction), approximately 80% were alive three years after the initial episode." Also on page 442 the last sentence in the left hand column should have read "In 1983 we looked at 125 patients with ventricular fibrillation."