Impairment of delayed skin test responses correlated with disease activity. However, in Hodgkin's disease, anergy to recall antigens was common even during remission. Serial patient studies confirmed the relationship of skin test responses to disease activity and showed a trend toward progressive loss of reactivity. Patients with quiescent Hodgkin's disease responded normally to bacillus Calmette-Guérin (BCG) vaccination, while a small group with active disease and systemic manifestations exhibited neither local reactions to vaccination nor conversion of tuberculin responses. [The SCP indicates that this paper has been cited in over 180 publications since 1961.]

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"My interests in tumor immunology and in Hodgkin's disease dated back to my fellowship years at Yale University, but Roswell Park Memorial Institute afforded me an ideal opportunity for long-term studies in a sizable and cooperative patient population, as well as providing funding for research associates such as N. Primikirios. At the time, serial skin testing of recall skin tests and BCG vaccination to measure immunologic reactivity. Since I wasn't sure what effects BCG might have in Hodgkin's disease, I undertook a formal study of this question subsequently, using both a battery of recall skin tests and BCG vaccination to measure immunologic reactivity. Since I wasn't sure what effects BCG might have in addition to converting the tuberculin response, I included appropriate controls. Thus started the first stratified, prospective study of BCG vaccination in malignant lymphoma. Response to BCG proved to be a rather good prognostic indicator for patients with disseminated Hodgkin's disease. We also found that BCG was a general stimulant of delayed hypersensitivity responses in man and that it might exert a favorable effect in malignant lymphoma of limited extent."


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