

Different Reticulocyte Volume in Diabetes Mellitus Patients with and without Hypercholesterolemia and/or Hypertriglyceridemia

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Abstract

Red cells and reticulocytes from patients with diabetes mellitus (DM) were analysed using laser and computer technology of H*3 hematology analyzer. Four groups of diabetes mellitus patients: diabetes with normolipemia (DM) (n=12) and DM patients with excess triglyceride (DM-T) (n=7) or cholesterol (DM-C) (n=21) or both (DM-TC) (n=21) were studied. Mean corpuscular volume of mature red cells (Mean \pm SD = 93.6 \pm 5.5 fl) and reticulocyte (119.1 \pm 12.3 fl) of patients with DM-T was not significantly increased from normal (red cell, 90.0 \pm 3.5 fl; reticulocyte, 115.2 \pm 7.3 fl). Plasma triglyceride levels had no significant correlation with red cell MCV, reticulocyte MCV and %Hb A1c. This suggests that high triglyceride levels in DM are not dose-dependent in producing increased MCV of red cells and reticulocytes. Comparing between DM-T and DM-C, red cells and reticulocytes from DM-C patients had significantly decreased MCV (red cell, 85.5 \pm 6.1 fL; reticulocyte, 103.8 \pm 7.4 fL). Plasma cholesterol levels were inversely correlated with MCV of red cells (r=-0.377, p=0.003) and also MCV of reticulocytes (r=-0.418, p=0.001). In addition, cholesterol levels showed considerable correlation with Hb A1c (r=0.572, p=0.004). The red cell volume change in DM-C patients may be partly due to the shift in balance of cholesterol exchange between red cell membranes and serum lipoproteins.

Key word : Diabetes Mellitus, Hypercholesterolemia, Hypertriglyceridemia, Reticulocyte

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Diabetic patients frequently have increased levels of cholesterol and triglyceride. An increase in cholesterol and triglyceride levels may play a role in vascular complications, ischemia and hypoxia. Hypoxia can contribute to progression of tissue injury in diabetic patients⁽¹⁾. Increased tissue oxygen tension by administration of recombinant erythropoietin has been postulated to slow the course of microvasculopathic complications⁽²⁾. Since some diabetic patients may have kidney complications⁽³⁾, we have thus analysed reticulocyte maturation and cell volume in comparison with mature red cells in the same subjects as well as their relationships with hypercholesterolemia and/or hypertriglyceridemia.

PATIENTS AND METHOD

Cytometric Analysis of Blood Cells

EDTA Blood was analyzed by the H*3 blood cell analyzer (Technicon Instruments Corporation, Tarrytown, New York). The biconcave red cells were changed into isovolumetric sphere by using special chemical treatment. Cell volume and hemoglobin concentration of red cells were measured using the principle of laser light-scattering and Mie scattering theory^(4,5). The degree of light scattering from the red cells is dependent on size or red cell volume and its refractive index. An electronic data-processing system derived values for cell volume and refractive index for each red cell. Because red cell refractive index is a linear function of hemoglobin concentration, the derived refractive index is converted to cell hemoglobin concentration.

The red cell parameters included Mean Corpuscular Volume (MCV), Cellular Hemoglobin Concentration Mean (CHCM), Red Cell Distribution Width (RDW), Hemoglobin Distribution Width (HDW), and red cell cytogram analysis. MCV was the average red cell volume, which averaged from around 40,000 - 50,000 red cells. CHCM was the measurement of hemoglobin concentration in each red cell. The value was the average from the measurement of large population of red cells. RDW was derived as the coefficient of variation of red cell volume histogram. The calculation was based on the MCV/ standard deviation of cell volume. This parameter indicated heterogeneity in cell volume of red cell population. HDW was derived as the standard deviation of the hemoglobin concentration histogram. The red cell cytogram was the

plot of red cell as the function of cell volume and intracellular hemoglobin concentration. Microcyte had a cell volume less than 60 fl and macrocyte was greater than 120 fl. Hypochromic red cell had a hemoglobin concentration less than 28 g/dl and hyperchromic red cell was greater than 41 g/dl. Red cell subpopulations of red cells with extremely low hemoglobin concentration (down to 1 g/dl) and with extremely small volume (less than 20 fl down to 1 fl) were further analysed using an external computer program. Percentage of each subpopulation was reported.

Determination of Hb A1c

Blood samples from patients were determined for Hb A1c using high performance liquid chromatography (HPLC) (Model VARIANT Hemoglobin Testing System, BioRad Laboratories, Hercules, California, USA)⁽⁶⁾. This automated HPLC utilized the principle of cation exchange⁽⁷⁻⁹⁾. It is renowned for high-efficiency, great sensitivity and rapidity for clinical analysis⁽¹⁰⁾.

Determination of Triglyceride and Cholesterol

Triglyceride and cholesterol were measured using an automated analyzer (Model Dimension RL, Dade Behring, USA) in a clinical chemistry laboratory, Department of Pathology, Ramathibodi Hospital.

RESULTS

Reticulocyte volume in the patient with hypercholesterolemia was decreased in both DM-C and DM-TC. Markedly decreased reticulocyte volume (MCVr) was noted in DM-C (103.8 ± 7.4 fl.) and DM-TC (102.7 ± 5.5 fl.) patients while normal MCVr was 115.2 ± 7.3 fl. (Table 1). Decreased change was also found in red cell (MCVg) both DM-C (85.5 ± 6.1 fl.) and DM-TC (85.4 ± 7.0 fl.), whereas, normal MCVg was 90.0 ± 3.5 fl.. On the other hand hypercholesterolemia patients (C) and hypertriglyceridemia with hypercholesterolemia patients (TC) had increased MCVg (96.4 ± 5.9 and 94.9 ± 7.7 fl., respectively) when compared with the normal group. Moreover, MCVr of the TC group (115.5 ± 10.8 fl.) did not change while MCVr of the C group was markedly increased (123.3 ± 6.5 fl.) when compared with normal MCVr. The mean level of MCV in mature red cells (MCVg) and reticulocyte (MCVr) that were obtained from DM-T patients was 93.6 ± 5.5 fl and 119.1 ± 12.3 fl respec-

Table 1. Mean and standard deviation ($\bar{X} \pm SD$) of Reticulocyte - red cell data, triglyceride, cholesterol and %Hb A_{1c} in various groups of patients.

Patient groups	($\bar{X} \pm SD$)						
	N	%Reticulocyte	MCVr (fl.)	MCVg (fl.)	Triglyceride (mg/dl)	Cholesterol (mg/dl)	%Hb A _{1c}
Normal	14	0.9 \pm 0.5	115.2 \pm 7.3	90.0 \pm 3.5	92.9 \pm 28.8*	173.7 \pm 13.5*	5.0 \pm 1.0#
DM	12	1.5 \pm 0.4	107.8 \pm 9.2	89.9 \pm 9.9	106.2 \pm 28.5	187.4 \pm 15.5	8.7 \pm 2.0
DM-C	21	1.4 \pm 0.5	103.8 \pm 7.4	85.5 \pm 6.1	109.5 \pm 29.5	240 \pm 27.2	8.2 \pm 2.0
DM-T	7	1.3 \pm 0.6	119.1 \pm 12.3	93.6 \pm 5.5	242.3 \pm 102.3	173.1 \pm 12.9	6.9 \pm 0.7
DM-TC	21	1.5 \pm 0.7	102.7 \pm 5.5	85.4 \pm 7.0	298.5 \pm 129.9	255.2 \pm 31.3	8.8 \pm 2.5
C	12	0.9 \pm 0.3	123.3 \pm 6.5	96.4 \pm 5.9	96.3 \pm 32.9	247.8 \pm 32.2	4.6 \pm 0.6
T	1	-	-	-	195	164.0	4.8
TC	12	1.3 \pm 0.4	115.5 \pm 10.8	94.9 \pm 7.7	202 \pm 65.1	261.5 \pm 41.8	4.4 \pm 0.9

Note * = normal range from clinical chemistry laboratory, Department of Pathology, Ramathibodi Hospital
 # = normal range from instruction manual of VARIANT Hb A_{1c} short program, BioRad.

Table 2. Comparison data and statistic value (P-value) of MCVr and MCVg between normal and various groups of subjects both with and without diabetes mellitus.

Variable grouping	MCVr		MCVg	
	Comparison	P-value	Comparison	P-value
Normal,DM	↓	0.0317	-	0.9904
Normal,DM-C	↓ ↓	<0.0001	↓	0.0210
Normal,DM-T	-	0.3684	-	0.0756
Normal,DM-TC	↓ ↓	<0.0001	↓	0.0485
Normal,C	↑	0.0134	↑	0.0031
Normal,TC	-	0.9399	↑	0.0426

tively, whereas, those in DM patients were 89.9 \pm 9.9 fl and 107.8 \pm 9.2 fl respectively. From these data we found that MCVg and MCVr of DM-C and DM-TC patients were significantly decreased from normal (Table 2).

Triglyceride levels did not significantly correlate with red cell MCV (MCVg), reticulocyte MCV (MCVr) and %Hb A_{1c} ($r=-0.098$, -0.076 , 0.152 , respectively) (Fig. 1). In contrast, cholesterol levels inversely correlated well with red cell MCV

($r=-0.377$) (Fig. 2A), with reticulocyte MCV ($r=-0.418$) in Fig. 2B and positively correlation with A_{1c} ($r=0.572$) (Fig. 2C). The correlation was statistically significant at $p=0.003$, 0.001 and 0.004 , for red cell MCV, reticulocyte MCV and %Hb A_{1c} respectively.

DISCUSSION

Reticulocyte uses both glycolytic pathway and ATP from mitochondrial source. Diabetic

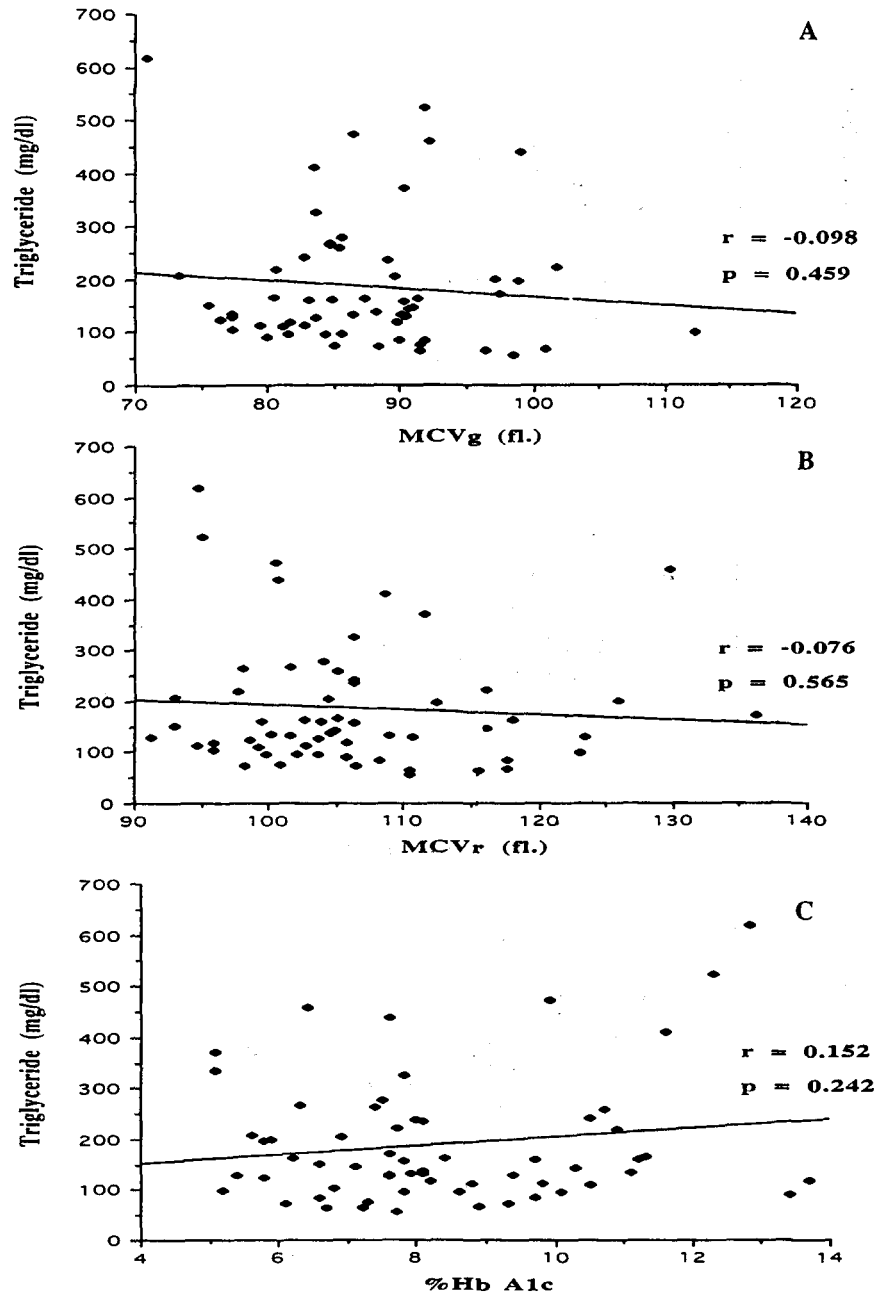


Fig. 1. Correlation between plasma triglyceride level and various parameters: (A) triglyceride and red cell MCV (MCVg), (B) triglyceride and reticulocyte MCV (MCVr) and (C) triglyceride and % Hb A_{1c}.

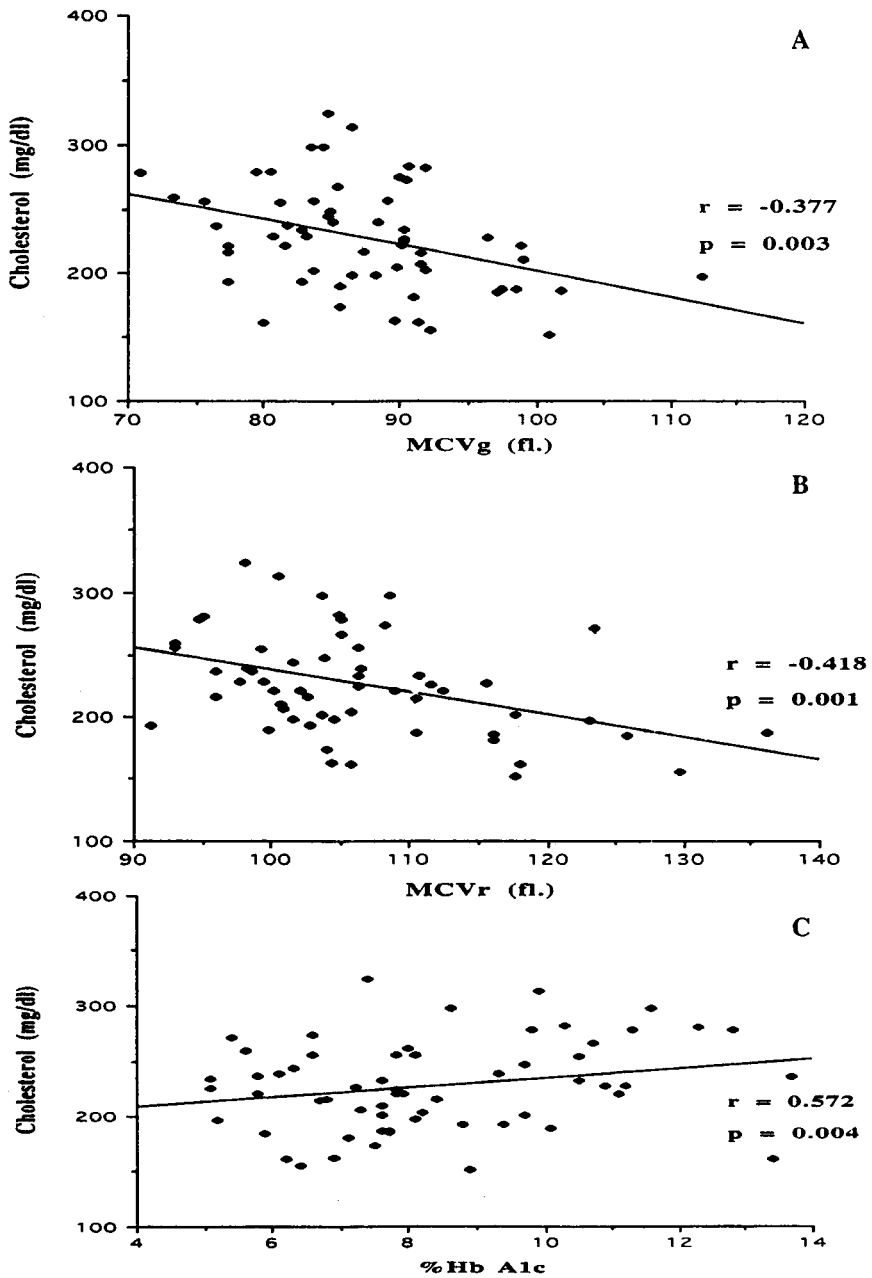


Fig. 2. Correlation between plasma cholesterol level and various parameters: (A) cholesterol and red cell MCV (MCVg), (B) cholesterol and reticulocyte MCV (MCVr) and (C) cholesterol and % Hb A_{1c}.

patients have high glucose levels in the circulation. It is noted that diabetic patients had lower MCVr with increased % reticulocyte count compared to normal. Enhanced production may have an effect on a slight reduction in reticulocyte cell volume. The exact mechanism of glucose on reticulocyte cell volume is not known. It is interesting to find that diabetic patients with cholesterolemia had statistical correlation between decreased MCVr and increased cholesterol concentration in the blood. Not only reticulocyte, mature red cells also have decreased MCV in diabetic patients with cholesterolemia.

Cholesterol is one component of the red cell membrane. High concentrations of cholesterol

may interfere with membrane assembly during the maturation process of erythroid cells. In addition, cholesterol can be inserted into the membrane structure. A high cholesterol concentration may disturb the membrane structure and may lead to unproportional equilibrium between cell volume and cell content. Since membrane structure is one of the important factors for red cell deformability, disturbance of red cell deformability in diabetic patients with cholesterolemia may contribute to derangement in blood flow intravascularly. It should be considered whether this is of clinical relevance to vascular obstruction in diabetic patients or not. This is a possible factor that may lead to further complications.

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ความแตกต่างของปริมาณเซลล์เม็ดเลือดแดงชนิดเรติคูลocytes ในผู้ป่วยเบาหวานที่มีภาวะโคเลสเตอรอลสูงและ / หรือภาวะไตรกลีเซอไรด์สูง

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ได้ทำการวิเคราะห์เม็ดเลือดแดงและเม็ดเลือดแดงชนิดเรติคูลocytes ในผู้ป่วยเบาหวาน โดยใช้เครื่องมือวิเคราะห์เซลล์อัตโนมัติที่ใช้หลักการแสงเลเซอร์และคอมพิวเตอร์เครื่อง H*3 ผู้ป่วยเบาหวานมี 4 ประเภทคือ (1.) ผู้ป่วยเบาหวานที่มีภาวะไขมันปกติจำนวน 12 ราย (2.) ผู้ป่วยเบาหวานที่มีไตรกลีเซอไรด์สูงจำนวน 7 ราย (3.) ผู้ป่วยเบาหวานที่มีโคเลสเตอรอลสูง จำนวน 21 ราย และ (4.) ผู้ป่วยเบาหวานที่มีทั้งไตรกลีเซอไรด์และโคเลสเตอรอลสูงทั้งสองอย่างจำนวน 21 ราย พบว่าผู้ป่วยเบาหวาน กลุ่มที่มีไตรกลีเซอไรด์สูงมีค่าเฉลี่ยปริมาณของเม็ดเลือดแดง (มัธยฐาน \pm ความแปรปรวน = 93.6 ± 5.5 เฟมโตลิตร) และค่าเฉลี่ยปริมาณเม็ดเลือดแดงชนิดเรติคูลocytes (119.1 ± 12.3 เฟมโตลิตร) สูงกว่าคนปกติ (เม็ดเลือดแดง 90.0 ± 3.5 เฟมโตลิตร, เม็ดเลือดแดงเรติคูลocytes 115.2 ± 7.3 เฟมโตลิตร) อย่างไม่มีนัยสำคัญ ระดับของไตรกลีเซอไรด์ในพลาสมาของผู้ป่วยไม่มีความสัมพันธ์กับค่าเฉลี่ยปริมาณของเม็ดเลือดแดง หรือค่าเฉลี่ยปริมาณเม็ดเลือดแดงเรติคูลocytes และระดับฮีโมโกลบินชนิด A1c แสดงว่าระดับไตรกลีเซอไรด์ที่สูงขึ้นไม่ทำให้ปริมาณเซลล์แปรตามอย่างมีสัมพันธ์กันตามปริมาณไตรกลีเซอไรด์ เมื่อเปรียบเทียบระหว่างกลุ่มผู้ป่วยเบาหวานที่มีไตรกลีเซอไรด์สูงกับกลุ่มที่มีโคเลสเตอรอลสูง พบว่ากลุ่มหลังมีปริมาณเซลล์ลดลงทั้งเม็ดเลือดแดง และเม็ดเลือดแดงชนิดเรติคูลocytes ที่ลดลงอย่างมีนัยสำคัญ (85.5 ± 6.1 เฟมโตลิตรในเม็ดเลือดแดง และ 103.8 ± 7.4 เฟมโตลิตรในเรติคูลocytes) และพบว่าระดับโคเรสเตอรอลในพลาสมาลดลง จะทำให้พบปริมาณเซลล์ของเม็ดเลือดแดงปรับตัวได้ดีขึ้น โดยมีค่าความสัมพันธ์ $r = -0.377$, $p = 0.003$ และพบว่าดัชนีในเรติคูลocytes ด้วยเช่นกัน $r = -0.418$, $p = 0.001$ นอกจากนี้ยังพบว่าระดับโคเรสเตอรอลมีความสัมพันธ์กับระดับฮีโมโกลบิน A1c ($r = 0.572$, $p = 0.004$) การที่ระดับโคเรสเตอรอลในผู้ป่วยเบาหวาน ทำให้ค่าเฉลี่ยปริมาณเม็ดเลือดแดงเปลี่ยนแปลง อาจเกิดจากการแลกเปลี่ยนโคเรสเตอรอลในพลาสมากับในเยื่อหุ้มเซลล์เม็ดเลือดแดง และมีไลโปโปรตีนเกี่ยวข้องด้วย

คำสำคัญ : เบาหวาน, ภาวะโคเลสเตอรอลสูง, ภาวะไตรกลีเซอไรด์สูง, เรติคูลocytes

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