

Introduction to Candida

Systemic Candidiasis

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1. INTRODUCTION TO CANDIDA

1.1. Description of the Disease

Candidiasis is the prototypic opportunistic fungal disease. *Candida* spp. reside most commonly in the gastrointestinal tract^{1,2} and vagina, where they are normally held in check by as-yet incompletely defined local factors that include competition with the resident bacterial flora and innate effectors of nonspecific mucosal resistance.^{3,4} Infrequently, but under a wide variety of clinical circumstances, these normally inconspicuous commensals can multiply on or invade through the mucosal surface to initiate local or systemic disease. Various immunologic and nonimmunologic conditions can predispose to such opportunistic infections.⁵ Among the former are certain malignancies⁶⁻⁸ and the use of cytotoxic or immunosuppressive therapy.^{9,10} Non-immunologic predisposing factors include diabetes,¹¹ trauma,¹² pregnancy,¹³ antibiotic therapy,⁷ and hyperalimentation.¹⁴ Not infrequently, such predisposing factors occur in combination.

Significant risk factors for nosocomial candidiasis in patients with cancer include previous surgery, neutropenia, central catheterization, chemotherapy, specific antibiotic treatment, and peripheral cultures positive for

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Candida spp.¹⁵ Additional risk factors may include the presence of a bladder catheter, treatment with two or more antibiotics, azotemia, transfer from another hospital, diarrhea, and candiduria.¹⁶ The potential roles of dietary, mechanical or iatrogenic factors have been reviewed by Odds,¹⁷ and the clinical and microbiological aspects of nosocomial candidiasis have been reviewed by Pfaller.¹⁸

Although the syndromes of candidiasis can be broadly categorized into cutaneous, mucocutaneous, and systemic forms, more specialized classifications based on the predominant site(s) of infection are useful clinically. Systemic infections can include prosthetic valve disease, endophthalmitis, hepatosplenic candidiasis, peritonitis, endocarditis, meningitis, arthritis, and osteomyelitis, whereas mucocutaneous infections can include esophagitis, vulvovaginitis, cystitis, oral thrush, and denture stomatitis.^{17,19}

In recent years, mucocutaneous candidiasis has garnered much attention because an especially noxious form that affects the mouth, tongue, and esophagus is very common among patients infected by human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).^{20–22} In general, it appears that granulocytopenia or defective phagocyte function promotes systemic disease, whereas reduced T-cell/macrophage function promotes mucocutaneous disease. As the immunology of cutaneous and mucocutaneous disease is covered in Chapter 5, this chapter will center on systemic candidiasis. Although results obtained from animal models are featured prominently in this chapter, where possible, we will highlight results obtained with human materials. An excellent review of the animal models used to study various forms of candidiasis was published by Guentzel *et al.*²³

1.2. Etiology

There are almost 200 recognized species in the genus *Candida*,²⁴ including those organisms formerly classified as *Torulopsis* spp., but only a few species are part of the normal flora and/or regularly cause human disease. The two most common pathogenic *Candida* spp. are *C. albicans* and *C. tropicalis*. Although precise figures are difficult to obtain, *C. albicans* appears to be responsible for approximately 60–75% of all candidal disease, *C. tropicalis* for 15–25%, *C. glabrata* for 10–15%, *C. parapsilosis* for 5–15% and *C. krusei* for about 2%.^{6,25} *C. tropicalis* appears to be less pathogenic than *C. albicans* under most circumstances, but disease caused by *C. tropicalis* has become more prevalent, especially in individuals with hematologic malignancies and those undergoing bone marrow transplantation.^{26,27} Based on their histopathologic observations of the GI tracts of individuals with *C. tropicalis* and *C. albicans* infections, Walsh and Merz²⁸ proposed that *C. tropicalis* was more enteroinvasive than *C. albicans* in susceptible hosts. Howlett²⁹ reported that *Candida* spp. differ in their ability to penetrate keratinized rat tongue mucosa (*C. albicans* > *C. tropicalis* and *C. krusei* > *C. parapsilosis* and *C. guilliermondii*),

and a more recent study suggests that clinical isolates of *C. albicans* differ in their pathogenicity for dorsal rat tongue mucosa.³⁰ The ability of *C. albicans* to form hyphae is believed to be important for colonization and invasion of the oral and vaginal mucosa.^{31,32} Species with less pathogenic potential, e.g., *C. parapsilosis*, *C. krusei* and *C. guilliermondii*, are often associated with a more restricted range of clinical conditions. For example, *C. parapsilosis* is found in paronychia, endocarditis, endophthalmitis and otitis media; *C. guilliermondii* causes endocarditis, cutaneous candidiasis and onychomycosis; and *C. krusei* occasionally causes endocarditis.^{18,19,33} Since the three organisms mentioned last are more commonly found among the flora of skin than in the gastrointestinal tract,¹⁹ this ecological niche might position them to initiate the clinical syndromes mentioned previously. *C. lusitaniae*, an organism which the diagnostic laboratory can easily confuse with *C. tropicalis*, and *C. parapsilosis* are also being identified more frequently as a cause of disease in immunosuppressed individuals.³⁴ Infections due to *C. lusitaniae* and *C. guilliermondii*, *Candida* spp. of low intrinsic virulence, can be difficult management problems since either organism may be resistant to polyene antibiotics.^{35,36}

1.3. Epidemiology

Although various species of *Candida* can be isolated from lower animals and from numerous environmental sources, summarized in Odds,¹⁷ most human candidal disease was considered to be of endogenous origin until a few years ago. It has been known for some time that there are two primary serotypes of *C. albicans*, A and B.³⁷ Since all *C. albicans* strains have identical sugar assimilation and fermentation patterns when tested with the usual limited battery of substrates, and since disease was considered to be endogenous, little effort was expended in attempting to determine intraspecific strain differences until recently. During the last decade, at least eight typing methods that are potentially applicable to the epidemiology of *C. albicans* infections have been developed. The methods include biotyping,^{38,39} resistotyping,⁴⁰ sensitivity to killer yeasts,⁴¹ extracellular enzyme production,⁴² immunoblotting,⁴³ morphotyping,⁴⁴ DNA restriction fragment analysis,^{45,46} and electrophoretic karyotyping.^{47,48}

Such methods have been used to investigate outbreaks,^{49,50} to determine the dominance of a strain type in a clinical syndrome,^{51,52} or simply to survey the biotypes predominant in an institutional or geographic environment.^{53–55} In two of these studies,^{53,55} isolates of *C. albicans* from different anatomic sites in the same patient appeared to be the same, although Soll *et al.*⁵⁶ isolated multiple strains and species of *Candida* from a single patient from different anatomic sites at different times during the course of disease. The studies to date have been limited, but some candidal infections may prove to be acquired from exogenous (possibly nosocomial) sources rather than from the patient's own endogenous yeast-cell flora.⁵⁴

2. SYSTEMIC CANDIDIASIS

2.1. Innate Immunity

2.1.1. Nutritional Control Mechanisms

Although *C. albicans* requires biotin for growth,^{57,58} its other nutritional needs can be satisfied by simple, fully-defined media that contain any of a wide range of carbon sources; ammonium, sulfate and phosphate salts; and trace elements. Notwithstanding this metabolic versatility, some of the innate mechanisms responsible for inhibiting *Candida* spp. proliferation *in vivo* may operate on the level of substrate deprivation or sequestration. The best established of these mechanisms involves the sequestration of iron by two host-derived iron-binding proteins, transferrin and lactoferrin. Indeed, the observations that normal human serum inhibited the growth of *C. albicans in vitro* and that this effect was reversed by addition of iron were directly responsible for the discovery of transferrin,⁵⁹ the major iron-binding protein of serum. The specific granules of neutrophils contain large amounts of an iron-binding protein, apolactoferrin, that is structurally homologous to transferrin.⁶⁰⁻⁶² Not surprisingly, apolactoferrin has also been shown to be candidastatic by virtue of its ability to bind iron.⁶³ Recent evidence⁶⁴⁻⁶⁶ suggests that *in vitro* and *in vivo* growth restriction of *C. albicans* may also be mediated by a calcium and/or zinc-binding protein that has been found in the cytoplasm of neutrophils and certain epithelial cells by a number of workers. These studies have been reviewed by Steinbakk *et al.*⁶⁶ Ongoing work by Wang and Lehrer (unpublished data) suggests that competition for biotin between *C. albicans* and various bacteria requiring biotin, including oral streptococci, may play a role in limiting the population density of *C. albicans* in the mouth. An increased local population of *C. albicans* occurs in the oral cavity of many diabetics and may be attributable to the higher concentrations of glucose in oral secretions from hyperglycemic individuals.⁶⁷ Other host factors that may regulate the growth of oral *C. albicans* have been reviewed by Epstein *et al.*⁶⁸

The factors responsible for maintaining relatively low concentrations of *C. albicans* within the gastrointestinal tract are understood only in part, and include competition with other members of the intestinal flora and host immune factors. The areas of colonization are highly selective and may be related to the surface characteristics of the affected epithelium and its keratin.⁶⁹ In rats reared conventionally, the administration of broad-spectrum antibiotics⁷⁰ and corticosteroids⁷¹ both predispose to long lasting intestinal carriage of *C. albicans*. Cantorna and Balish⁷² examined the ability of *C. albicans* to colonize the gastrointestinal tract of germfree mice. Doubly immunodeficient beige and athymic (bg/bg and nu/nu) animals developed extensive yeast and hyphal infections of the palate, tongue, esophagus, and stomach, whereas singly

immunodeficient beige or athymic mice and their normal nu/+, bg/+ littermates developed only moderate mucosal infections. The doubly immunodeficient mice later also developed progressive systemic infections caused by the *C. albicans*. The possibility that the small intestine might contain and secrete antifungal components that might affect *Candida* spp. population density has not been examined systematically. It warrants attention, however, since murine Paneth cells, which line the base of the small intestine's numerous crypts, contain large amounts of mRNA for cryptdin,⁷³ a member of a family of peptides (defensins) many of whose members are strongly candidacidal.⁷⁴

2.1.2. Intravascular Access and Clearance

Clinical disseminated (systemic) candidiasis results when *C. albicans* enters the vascular system in numbers that exceed the ability of host defense mechanisms to clear them and prevent their subsequent growth in the tissues. *C. albicans* probably most often gains entry to the vascular system from its reservoir in the gastrointestinal tract, but the organisms may also be introduced into the circulation from the skin via indwelling intravenous lines or by injection of contaminated materials. In a historic experiment that is not likely to be repeated soon, Krause *et al.*⁷⁵ administered a large number of viable *C. albicans* blastospores intragastrically to a normal human subject. Some of the fungi appeared in the circulating blood within 30 minutes, evidently having traversed the epithelial barriers of the normal human gastrointestinal tract to do so. Sass *et al.*⁷⁶ have provided evidence that the transgastrointestinal migration of particles, such as latex spheres, fungal spores, and pollen grains, is mediated by M cells in Peyer's patches and that subsequent intravascular access is provided via the abdominal lymphatics. Since even an intact gastrointestinal tract evidently permits some intraluminal *C. albicans* yeast cells to gain access to the blood, intestines damaged by disease, drugs, or trauma are likely to be even more pervious. Since bloodstream seeding by intestinal *C. albicans* undoubtedly is initiated by fungal organisms adherent to the epithelial surface, factors (e.g., broad spectrum antibiotics) that enhance *Candida* spp. growth by decreasing microbial competition for nutrients or anchorage sites probably increase the relative likelihood of hematogenous seeding.

Clearance of intravenously injected organisms from rabbit blood shows biphasic kinetics. Approximately 99% of the organisms leave the blood within 10 minutes, followed by a longer period of low-grade fungemia. Depending on the route of injection, different organs predominate in clearance. After peripheral venous injections, lungs take up 45% of the total inoculum; after mesenteric vein injection, liver takes up almost 60%.⁷⁷ Mice injected with live, but not formalin-killed, *C. albicans* evidenced accelerated reticuloendothelial clearance of carbon particles.⁷⁸

2.1.3. Polymorphonuclear Leukocytes

2.1.3a. Protective Role of Polymorphonuclear Leukocytes in Vivo. The polymorphonuclear leukocytes (neutrophils, PMNL) are extremely important in defense against systemic infection by *C. albicans*, as evidenced by the fact that a) neutropenic patients are highly susceptible to the development of candidiasis,^{79,80} b) the disappearance of organisms from tissue parallels the appearance of PMNL,⁸¹ and c) patients with leukocyte defects, such as those seen in hereditary or acquired myeloperoxidase (MPO) deficiency or chronic granulomatous disease (CGD), may experience fungal infections caused by *Candida* spp. and other organisms. (MPO is one component of the oxidative pathways involved in killing microorganisms within phagocytic cells. It is discussed in more detail in Section 2.1.3c.) The importance of the leukocyte, whose numbers may have been reduced by bone marrow suppressive disease or therapy, has been shown in animal models where granulocyte transfusions resulted in partial reversal of the effects of leukopenia.^{82,83} For example, although normal dogs tolerate 10^7 *C. albicans* organisms administered intravenously, widespread disseminated candidiasis results when only 10^6 organisms are given to leukopenic animals. Granulocyte transfusions to the immunosuppressed dogs, however, afforded substantial protection against the fungus.⁸² Studies with diffusion chambers placed intraperitoneally in mice have also provided evidence for the importance of phagocytes in clearing sites of *C. albicans in vivo*.⁸⁴

Hereditary MPO deficiency, usually discovered after the routine use of certain automated blood count analyzers, appears to be a common but infrequently diagnosed condition. In a population of 60,000 patients tested at Stamford Hospital in Stamford, Connecticut over 40 months, 28 MPO-deficient persons were identified. Half of these had completely MPO-deficient PMNL and the others had partial deficiencies. Most MPO-deficient patients had no clinical sequelae, but several had experienced serious systemic infections caused by *Candida* spp. or other organisms. The most serious of these occurred in a 30-year-old woman who also had insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus and developed fatal pneumonia caused by *C. albicans* and *C. parapsilosis*. Overall, 4 of the first 29 reported individuals with complete (homozygous) hereditary MPO deficiency had systemic candidal infections.⁸⁵⁻⁸⁹ Three of these persons had coexisting diabetes mellitus, which may also have contributed to their susceptibility to systemic candidiasis. If the frequency of homozygous hereditary MPO deficiency is as high as suggested by the Stamford Hospital study ($14/60,000 = 0.00023$) then, assuming an autosomal recessive pattern of inheritance, it can be calculated that the heterozygous carrier state is likely to exist in approximately 1.5% of the population. Although PMNL from subjects that were heterozygous for hereditary MPO deficiency contained decreased levels of MPO, their ability to kill ingested *C. albicans* was intact.⁸⁵ Consequently, it seems unlikely that partial

(heterozygous) MPO deficiency will prove to be a significant risk factor for systemic candidiasis in humans.

The association of acquired MPO deficiency with leukemic and pre-leukemic states is now well recognized.⁹⁰⁻⁹² In one such patient studied at UCLA, 99.2% of blood PMNL were completely MPO deficient, and the cells showed greatly impaired killing of ingested *C. albicans*, *C. tropicalis* and *S. aureus in vitro*.⁹³ The patient succumbed to fungal infections caused by *A. fumigatus* and *C. albicans*. Although PMNL from patients with hereditary complete MPO deficiency can phagocytize the organisms normally, they are greatly impaired in their ability to kill *C. albicans* and certain other *Candida* species, including *C. tropicalis*, *C. stellatoidea*, and *C. krusei*.^{85,87,94} MPO-deficient PMNL also killed many, but not all, bacteria at a reduced rate.^{86,95} Although MPO appears to be essential for effective killing of *C. albicans* by human PMNL and mononuclear (MN) cells,^{85,96,97} other *Candida* species such as *C. parapsilosis*, *C. pseudotropicalis*, and *C. krusei* were killed effectively by MPO-deficient PMNL.⁹⁴ Certain of these (*C. parapsilosis* and *C. pseudotropicalis*) are also killed normally by PMNL from subjects with CGD.⁹⁴ It can be concluded from these observations that *C. albicans* is relatively resistant to human PMNL and that its eradication requires both MPO and hydrogen peroxide (H₂O₂). Other *Candida* species are killed effectively by PMNL mechanisms that require neither MPO nor H₂O₂. These nonoxidative mechanisms appear to be relatively ineffective in killing *C. albicans*, although some of them might contribute to candidastasis.

The effects of a number of additional underlying illnesses and their treatments on the candidacidal function of PMNL have been examined as well. Patients with neoplasms are predisposed to systemic candidal infections especially while receiving immunosuppressive therapy. PMNL from patients with acute leukemias are generally able to ingest *C. albicans* normally but frequently manifest decreased candidacidal activity.⁹⁸⁻¹⁰⁰ Similar results have been described in patients with large burns.¹⁰¹ PMNL from patients with chronic granulocytic leukemia have been reported to kill *C. albicans*¹⁰⁰ but not *C. guilliermondii*¹⁰² normally. Subjects with myeloid metaplasia, polycythemia vera, untreated metastatic solid tumors, Hodgkin's disease, and other lymphomas had PMNL with normal candidacidal activity for *C. albicans*. Patients receiving chemotherapy or radiation therapy for these conditions often had PMNL with diminished candidacidal activity.⁹⁹ Another study using *C. guilliermondii* to study PMNL from patients with various leukemias and lymphomas noted the frequent occurrence (12 of 24 patients) of candidacidal defects, often corrected *in vitro* by addition of levamisole.¹⁰³ The PMNL of patients with AIDS-related complex (ARC) and AIDS associated with deep candidiasis were reported to have a normal ability to kill *C. albicans*.¹⁰⁴

Although neonates are generally considered to be relatively immunocompromised hosts and were reported to have PMNL with decreased candidacidal activity,¹⁰⁵ this finding has not been confirmed.^{106,107} Malnourished

children, known to harbor large concentrations of *Candida* spp. in their upper intestinal tracts, were found to have PMNL with significantly decreased candidacidal activity.¹⁰⁸ The PMNL of selenium-deficient rats were reported to display impaired *in vitro* fungicidal activity for *C. albicans*.¹⁰⁹ Hyperosmolar conditions decreased ingestion and killing of *C. albicans* by human PMNL *in vitro*.¹¹⁰ Normal phagocytosis but decreased cidal activity against *C. albicans* has been reported in PMNL obtained from children with thalassaemia.¹¹¹ Amphotericin B-resistant *C. tropicalis* developed in a patient whose PMNL displayed diminished candidacidal activity against both *C. tropicalis* and *C. albicans*, especially when tested in autologous serum.¹¹²

In addition to their fungicidal activities, there is some evidence that PMNL may protect some tissues from destruction by the fungus as well. Edwards *et al.*,¹¹³ using an *in vitro* assay involving the development of a monolayer of endothelial cells,¹¹⁴ noted that the endothelial cells were protected from the harmful effects of candidal hyphae if PMNL were present. The mechanism(s) has not been delineated, but PMNL were attracted to the sites of hyphal attachment and spread over the hyphal elements, both within and beneath the endothelial cells.

In the healthy host, there is no shortage of PMNL to fend off *Candida* spp. PMNL are the most abundant phagocytes of circulating blood. In man, they are normally present at a concentration of approximately $2.5-5.0 \times 10^6/\text{ml}$ of blood, but this can increase several-fold in response to infection. Circulating mature PMNL are short-lived cells, $T_{1/2} = 6-7$ hours, with a minimal capacity for new protein synthesis. MN are only about 10% as numerous as PMNL in the peripheral blood, but after entering tissues, they undergo further differentiation which enables them to survive for days or weeks as macrophages.

2.1.3b. Interactions between Candida spp. and PMNL in Vitro. Although animal leukocytes are often used as surrogates for their human counterparts, the validity of this practice is more an article of faith than of science. Fortunately, the availability of human PMNL and MN has allowed their interactions with *Candida* spp. to be studied directly *in vitro*. Human blood is fungicidal for *C. albicans*, killing both blastoconidia and organisms bearing pseudohyphae up to 200 μm in length.¹¹⁵ The candidacidal activity of blood can be attributed directly to its leukocytes, since neither plasma nor serum alone kills *C. albicans*.^{116,117}

The relationship between *C. albicans* and the phagocytic process itself and associated events, such as chemotaxis, are incompletely understood, but some data have been gathered on chemotaxis and the opsonic requirements for phagocytosis of *C. albicans*. Viable or heat-killed *C. albicans* were chemotactic for human PMNL,¹¹⁸ as was mannan, a major component of the candidal cell wall.^{119,120} Intact cells and purified mannan activated the alternative pathway of complement,^{118,121} suggesting that *Candida*-induced chemotaxis could result from complement activation. Cutler¹²² described a

soluble factor from seven of eight isolates of *C. albicans* that was chemotactic for guinea pig PMNL in the absence of serum, a condition that precluded complement activation.

The role of complement in uptake and subsequent killing of *C. albicans* is somewhat controversial. Most studies have shown that complement enhances phagocytosis and suggested that both classical and alternative systems are involved.^{123–129} While there is agreement that serum complement factors facilitate phagocytosis^{85,130–132} and that intracellular killing of the organism is not influenced by the presence or absence of specific antibody,^{123,127,132} there is disagreement on specific aspects of the role of C3. Kernbaum¹²⁶ reported that phagocytosis and killing were normal in the absence of C3, Yamamura and Valdimarsson¹²⁴ reported that C3 was not necessary for ingestion of the organism but was necessary for killing, and Morrison and Cutler¹²⁷ reported that C3 was necessary for ingestion to occur. In one study,¹³³ the heat-stable opsonic factor of normal human serum was believed to be naturally occurring, low-level anti-*Candida* IgG. High antibody concentrations, typically present in serum from individuals with chronic mucocutaneous candidiasis or some patients with disseminated candidiasis, inhibited candidacidal activity by normal PMNL without significantly impairing phagocytic uptake.^{134–136}

Although most research emphasis has centered on the opsonic properties of complement and/or antibody, other factors may also influence ingestion of *Candida* spp. Ginsburg *et al.*¹³¹ reported that polycationic substances, such as nuclear histones, that accumulate in lesions after cell death and tissue destruction might function as efficient opsonins. Fleischmann *et al.*¹³⁷ reported that defensins, which are also polycationic peptides, were nonspecific opsonins that promoted the uptake of *C. albicans* and various bacteria by rabbit alveolar macrophages. The ability of defensins to opsonize *C. albicans* for uptake by PMNL has not been reported.

Several *in vivo* studies have provided evidence that complement participates in resistance to systemic candidiasis. Mice with various genetic defects involving complement were more susceptible to systemic challenge than those without such defects,^{123,138,139} as were normal guinea pigs depleted of the alternative pathway of complement activation by treatment with cobra venom factor.¹⁴⁰ Since two of the mouse strains were deficient in C5, these data lend support to the *in vitro* work of Morelli and Rosenberg¹²³ on the importance of C5 in the phagocytic process.

Unlike most bacteria, only a portion of *C. albicans* yeast cells ingested by human PMNL are killed intracellularly during the first few hours. This was first shown with a quantitative vital staining (methylene blue) assay, which revealed that PMNL from normal human donors killed $29\% \pm 7.4\%$ of ingested yeast phase *C. albicans* after 60 min.¹¹⁶ These data have been confirmed by assay systems based on Giemsa staining,¹⁴¹ isotope incorporation or chromium release,¹⁴² and colony counting,^{130,143} although the latter generally provide higher estimates of killing (approximately 50% after 60

minutes) by PMNL and MN. Serum, although required for efficient phagocytosis, did not facilitate killing of ingested organisms in one study¹¹⁶ but did so in another.¹⁴⁴ The presence of PMNL substantially enhanced the ability of purified human MN to kill *C. albicans*.⁹⁶ The ability of human PMNL to kill ingested *C. albicans* was abolished when the incubations were performed under anaerobic conditions or in the presence of MPO inhibitors (cyanide or azide), although ingestion of the yeasts was not inhibited by these treatments.

It is clear that *Candida* spp. differ in their susceptibility to the fungicidal mechanisms of the PMNL. Yeast forms of *C. albicans*, *C. tropicalis*, and *C. viswanathii*, three of the more pathogenic species of *Candida*, were killed more slowly and at higher murine peritoneal (thioglycollate-induced) PMNL:target ratios than less pathogenic species such as *C. guilliermondii*, *C. krusei*, and *C. parapsilosis*.¹⁴⁵ Nevertheless, all *Candida* spp. were killed. It is also clear that both yeast and filamentous (hyphal and pseudohyphal) forms of *C. albicans* can be damaged by PMNL, although the extent of damage and the mechanics of the killing process may differ, in particular, with those filamentous forms too large to be ingested by the PMNL. Scherwitz and Martin¹⁴⁶ reported 90% phagocytosis of yeasts versus 10% phagocytosis of germinated forms; Schuit¹⁴⁷ reported 35% killing of yeasts versus 10% killing of pseudohyphae; and Cockayne and Odds¹⁴⁸ reported that yeasts, germinated forms and hyphae, were all ingested to a similar extent but that the filamentous forms were killed to a greater extent than the other two forms. Additionally, Schuit¹⁴⁷ noted that both ingestion and killing were more rapid when MN were used instead of PMNL. The inconsistencies between the data from Schuit¹⁴⁷ and Cockayne and Odds¹⁴⁸ emphasize the difficulties in comparing data when different assay conditions are used. Brummer *et al.*¹⁴⁹ compared the ability of murine peritoneal and circulating PMNL to kill *C. albicans* and reported that PMNL obtained after intraperitoneal placement of proteose peptone and caseinate did not differ significantly from peripheral blood PMNL in their ability to kill *C. albicans*, whereas cells recovered after thioglycollate instillations were defective.

Various antibiotics may affect the ability of phagocytes to ingest and kill *C. albicans*, an important observation when one considers that antibiotic treatment is one of the two most important predisposing factors to the development of systemic candidiasis, the other factor being neutropenia. Sulfonamides interfered with killing of ingested *C. albicans* by PMNL by inhibiting myeloperoxidase (MPO)-mediated reactions.¹⁴³ Penicillin, tetracycline, chloramphenicol, and gentamicin did not interfere with PMNL candidacidal activity in one study,¹⁵⁰ although five aminoglycosides (including gentamicin) inhibited this function in another.¹⁵¹ Ketoconazole and Sc-39304 were reported to enhance the ability of human PMNL to kill ingested *C. albicans*,¹⁵² although the methods used may have assessed only those events transpiring in unsealed phagocytic vacuoles. Cilofungin (LY 12109) was reported to impair PMNL candidacidal activity by interfering with opsoniza-

tion and subsequent ingestion.¹⁵³ High levels of glucose and β -hydroxy butyrate were reported to inhibit the candidacidal activity of PMNL from diabetic, but not normal, subjects.¹⁵⁴ Amphotericin B has been reported to inhibit phagocytosis of *C. albicans* by PMNL.¹⁵⁵

There have been relatively few ultrastructural observations of phagocytosis and killing of *C. albicans* by PMNL. Belcher *et al.*,¹⁵⁶ and Richardson and Smith,¹⁵⁷ working with human and murine PMNL respectively, observed the postphagocytic fusion of PMNL lysosomes with tight and loose phagosomes, as well as the presence of *C. albicans* cells with intact cell walls but disintegrating plasma membranes and intracellular structures. Shortly after the observations of Richardson and Smith¹⁵⁷ appeared, Cech and Lehrer¹⁵⁸ reported that *C. albicans* ingested by human PMNL were found in two types of phagolysosomes: "unsealed vacuoles," which maintained communication with the extracellular compartment and "sealed vacuoles," which did not. Approximately 40% of all PMNL vacuoles were unsealed, and only 15% of the *C. albicans* blastospores within them had been killed within 1 hour. In contrast, approximately 72% of *C. albicans* inside the sealed vacuoles had been killed. The sequestration of *C. albicans* in sealed and unsealed PMNL vacuoles was confirmed by Levitz *et al.*,¹⁵⁹ who also extended these observations to MN. Many *C. albicans* blastospores within unsealed vacuoles remained viable after their ingestion by PMNL. Perhaps leakage of potentially fungicidal molecules (e.g., MPO, defensins, H_2O_2 , etc.) from unsealed vacuoles, or ingress of inhibitory ions and proteins from serum, or the combined effects of both processes contributed to the observed fungicidal activity.

2.1.3c. Oxidative Candidacidal Mechanisms of PMNL. The fungicidal mechanisms of human PMNL are of two general types: oxidative and nonoxidative. The former, which appear to be most important with respect to *C. albicans*,^{85,116,141} depend on the neutrophil's ability to synthesize a group of potent oxidants, including H_2O_2 , hydroxyl radicals, hypochlorous acids and chloramines. In normal PMNL, H_2O_2 is derived from the dismutation of superoxide anions, which are produced by an NADPH oxidase activated in PMNL after phagocytosis or stimulation by a variety of soluble mediators. The production of hypochlorous acid and chloramines by PMNL results from the ability of its MPO, an enzyme also found in MN, to catalyze the oxidation of chloride ion by H_2O_2 .¹⁶⁰ MPO occurs in the primary (azurophil) granules of normal human PMNL and is released into their phagocytic vacuoles and extracellularly when PMNL are exposed to microbes, including *C. albicans*. Although MPO is present in bone marrow promonocytes and most blood MN, it is lost when these cells mature into macrophages. A distinctly different peroxidase that exists in human eosinophils can generate hypobromous acid from bromide ions and H_2O_2 .¹⁶¹ Human eosinophils can also kill ingested *C. albicans* by oxidative mechanisms.¹⁶² Much evidence indicates that phagocytic normal human granulocytes produce hypochlorous acid^{163,164} and that hypochlorite, chloramines, and cell-free MPO- H_2O_2 -halide systems kill *Candida*

spp. and other fungi *in vitro*.^{165–169} Blastozoonidia from opaque phenotypes of *C. albicans* strain WO-1 were more susceptible to these oxidants than were white phenotypes.¹⁷⁰

The mechanisms involved in intracellular killing of *C. albicans* by PMNL have been studied actively for many years. That oxidative mechanisms, specifically those mediated by MPO and H₂O₂, are very important, was first reported over twenty years ago.^{85,116} The mechanisms of oxidant production and their significance for neutrophil-mediated antifungal activity have been clarified by studies of PMNL from patients with CGD and hereditary MPO deficiency. The PMNL of CGD patients are profoundly deficient in their ability to generate superoxide anion (O₂⁻) and H₂O₂ via the NADPH oxidase pathway as a consequence of various distinct molecular lesions. Most cases of CGD show X-linked inheritance and deficient PMNL function that arises from abnormalities affecting the large subunit of cytochrome b₅₅₈, a critical component of the activated NADPH oxidase complex. Other forms of CGD are autosomal and result from abnormalities of cytosolic activators of NADPH oxidase or from abnormalities affecting the small subunit of cytochrome b₅₅₈.^{171,172} In their review of 245 patients with CGD, Cohen *et al.*¹⁷³ reported that severe fungal infections, especially *Aspergillus* spp. pneumonia, occurred in 50 cases.

Since the infected host must deal with both yeast and hyphal forms in candidal lesions, a few investigators^{146–148} have compared the interaction of PMN with the yeast and hyphal forms of *C. albicans*, but many more have examined exclusively the yeast form^{85,116,123,124,130,141,147,149,156–158,174–177} or hyphal/pseudohyphal forms.^{97,113,153,159,167,168,178–184} Unfortunately, comparisons of data generated from *in vitro* systems in different laboratories are complicated by the differences in their effector:target ratios, incubation times, methods for determination of ingestion and/or killing, animal and anatomic sources of effector cells, and incubation conditions—especially with respect to the presence and concentration of serum in the assay. Many such studies involving either PMNL or mononuclear phagocytes and the yeast form of *C. albicans* have been tabulated in another recent review.⁵

Diamond and his colleagues have provided detailed observations concerning the contribution of oxidative mechanisms to the ability of human PMNL and MN to kill *C. albicans* hyphae or pseudohyphae.^{97,113,153,159,167,168,178–184} Using radiolabeled metabolic precursors, chemiluminescence, viable and nonviable *Candida*, and electron microscopy, Diamond *et al.*⁹⁷ were the first to demonstrate nonphagocytic damage to pseudohyphal forms of *C. albicans* by PMNL in the absence of serum. Initially, the PMNL spread over the hyphal surface to maximize membrane contact between the two forms. Fresh or heat-inactivated serum enhanced the process, but, in contrast to yeast forms, opsonization was not a requirement for the initiation of microbicidal processes by PMNL. The enhancement was related to anti-*Candida* antibody that was present in the sera. In subsequent reports, it was shown that damage to

hyphae was mediated by oxidative means, in particular by the MPO system.^{167,168,178} Involvement of MPO was concluded from the following observations: 1) pseudohyphal damage was inhibited by sodium cyanide, sodium azide, catalase, superoxide dismutase and 1,4 diazobicyclo (2,2,2) octane, all agents known to act on PMNL oxidative mechanisms, 2) PMNL from 3 of 4 patients with CGD, a disease in which PMNL are produced that have defective microbicidal activity, and from 2 patients with hereditary MPO deficiency, were unable to damage hyphae, 3) pseudohyphal forms were severely damaged in a PMNL-free *in vitro* system containing MPO, H₂O₂ and iodide or chloride, and the H₂O₂ in the system could be replaced by an H₂O₂-generating system, and 4) methionine, tryptophan and alanine, compounds capable of inhibiting the effects of hypochlorous acid and chloramines, inhibited killing of pseudohyphae.

Induction of the oxidative burst and production of reactive oxygen microbicidal intermediates is a complex process involving events initiated at the PMNL membrane with subsequent involvement of secondary messengers and intracellular responses necessary to the effective function of the cell.^{172,185} Delineating these aspects of the PMNL response to unopsonized and opsonized hyphae has been the principal focus of recent research on PMNL-*C. albicans* interactions by Diamond and his co-workers.^{97,153,167,178-184} A number of these studies are summarized in Table I. Attachment of PMNL to opsonized or unopsonized hyphae, and spreading over them, appears to be independent of opsonins since both events occur at the same rate in the presence or absence of opsonins. Some of the events following attachment and spreading, however, occur at different rates and one of them, PMNL membrane depolarization, occurs only when opsonized hyphae are attacked.¹⁸⁰ Moreover, PMNL exposed to unopsonized hyphae manifest a delayed rise of cytosolic free Ca⁺⁺,¹⁸⁰ and alterations in phospholipase C activation,¹⁵³ actin polymerization,¹⁸² and initiation of superoxide anion release.¹⁸⁰ PMNL degranulation results in low levels of β -glucuronidase release and in lactoferrin release. Much of the released lactoferrin is found bound to hyphal surfaces and does not appear in the supernatant. Whether *in vivo* hyphae of *C. albicans* correspond more closely to the opsonized or unopsonized forms used in these *in vitro* experiments remains to be determined.

2.1.3d. Nonoxidative Anticandidal Mechanisms of PMNL. The ability of human leukocytes to kill some *Candida* spp. by nonoxidative mechanisms most likely reflects the presence of proteins and peptides with intrinsic antifungal activity. The major antimicrobial components of human PMNL are present in a subset of the cell's cytoplasmic granules known as the "primary" or "azurophil" granules. They include defensins, lysozyme, cathepsin G (a serine protease) and several proteins that are homologous to it.¹⁸⁶ Of these, only defensins and several of the serine protease congeners are active against *Candida* spp.

TABLE I
Selected Biochemical and Morphological Observations
of Opsonized Zymosan and Opsonized or Unopsonized Hyphae
of *C. albicans* during Interaction with Human PMNL

	Opsonized zymosan	Opsonized hyphae	Unopsonized hyphae
Attachment/spreading ¹⁷⁹	Same kinetics	Same kinetics	Same kinetics
Intracellular Ca ⁺⁺ ¹⁷⁹	Peaked within 1 min; greatest concentration in periplasm	Peaked within 1 min; uniform distribution throughout hyphae	Peaked at 4 min; uniform distribution throughout hyphae
Membrane depolarization ¹⁸⁰	Ca ⁺⁺ increase first, then membrane depolarization, then respiratory burst	Ca ⁺⁺ increase first, then membrane depolarization, then respiratory burst	Ca ⁺⁺ increase delayed, no membrane depolarization, respiratory burst delayed
Role of GTP-binding proteins, sensitivity to pertussis-toxin ¹⁸¹	Partial abrogation of normal Ca ⁺⁺ , membrane and respiratory burst responses	Partial abrogation of normal Ca ⁺⁺ , membrane and respiratory burst responses	Ca ⁺⁺ increase completely eliminated, respiratory burst intact
Inositol triphosphate generation ¹⁵³	Transient rise in cellular inositol phosphates	Transient rise in cellular inositol phosphates	Transient rise in cellular inositol phosphates
Actin polymerization ¹⁸²	Rapid, initially diffuse, then collarlike, then cylinderlike	Rapid, initially diffuse, then collarlike, then cylinderlike	Delayed, delayed appearance of collarlike, cylinderlike
Degranulation ¹⁸²	Low levels of β -glucuronidase detected	Low levels of β -glucuronidase detected	Low levels of β -glucuronidase detected
Specific granule marker ¹⁸²		Lactoferrin release into supernatant minimal, but it was found bound to surface	Lactoferrin release into supernatant minimal, but it was found bound to surface
Effects of chelation on respiratory burst ¹⁸³	Eliminated respiratory burst completely	Partially inhibited (60%) respiratory burst if both intracellular and extracellular Ca ⁺⁺ chelated, superoxide response inhibited	Partially inhibited (23%) respiratory burst; if both intracellular and extracellular Ca ⁺⁺ chelated, superoxide response unchanged

The human PMNL contains four defensins, which are designated HNP-1,2,3, and 4. Homologous peptides, called "lysosomal cationic proteins" were initially discovered approximately 25 years ago by Zeya and Spitznagel in the PMNL of rabbits and guinea pigs.¹⁸⁷ The human defensins are small (Mr < 4,000) peptides that contain 29 (HNP-2), 30 (HNP 1 and 3) or 33 (HNP-4) residues.¹⁸⁸ The known defensins and their primary amino acid sequences are presented in Table II. All defensins contain an invariant cysteine motif composed of six cysteine residues. These form three intramolecular disulfide bonds that fold the peptides into a complexly shaped cyclic structure, as reviewed elsewhere.^{188,189} Although HNP-1, 2 and, 3 have identical primary sequences with the exception of their amino-terminal residues, only HNP-1 and HNP-2 kill *C. albicans* effectively *in vitro*.¹⁹⁰ HNP-1 and HNP-2 are remarkably abundant, and together they constitute approximately 4–5% of the total protein in human PMNL and 25–40% of the total protein in their azurophil granules.¹⁹¹ HNP-4, which is substantially less abundant than HNP-1 and HNP-2, also exerts candidacidal activity *in vitro*.¹⁹²

Rabbit¹⁹³ and rat^{194,195} PMNL contain six and four defensins, respectively. Several of these defensins include *C. albicans* among their broad antimicrobial spectrum.^{74,194,195} Although defensins have not yet been demonstrated in mouse PMNL, mRNA that codes for a typical defensin (cryptdin) is abundantly transcribed by cells that reside in the murine small intestine.⁷³ Based on *in situ* hybridization studies, the principal cells containing defensin message are epithelial (Paneth) cells located at the base of the intestinal crypts. Interstitial cells, presumably macrophages, in the small intestine's lamina propria also hybridized with the cryptdin probe.

The binding of defensins to *C. albicans* and the correlation of binding with candidacidal activity have been reported.¹⁷⁶ Several human, rabbit, and rat defensins kill *C. albicans* directly,^{176,177} while some others were relatively ineffective alone but caused synergistic interactions when combined with submicromolar concentrations of the active peptides.¹⁷⁷ HNP-1 was rendered ineffective against *C. albicans* in an anaerobic environment and its candidacidal effects were also blocked by chemicals that blocked mitochondrial respiration by the yeast cell targets. These observations suggest that oxidative metabolism by *C. albicans* sensitizes it to human defensins. Although the reasons for the links between mitochondrial respiration and defensin-susceptibility remain to be established, recent studies showing that human and rabbit defensins produced voltage-sensitive membrane channels in artificial membrane bilayers may provide some clues.¹⁹⁶ If the *Candida* cell's own transmembrane potential provides the chemical energy used by defensins to create membrane damaging channels, the protective effects of mitochondrial inhibitors such as m-chlorophenylhydrazine (CCCP) or azide might result from a depolarization of the target cell membrane which prevents defensin channel formation.

TABLE II
Primary Amino Acid Sequences of Defensins Extracted from the Leukocytes
of Various Species, Illustrating the Consensus of Seven Invariant Amino Acid Residues
(Six Cysteines and a Glycine), as Shown by the Standard Single-Letter Code;
Generally Conserved Residues are Indicated by Asterisks

Human	HNP-1	A	C	Y	C	R	I	P	A	C	I	A	G	E	R	R	Y	G	T	C	I	Y	Q	G	R	L	W	A	F	C	C				
	HNP-2	C	Y	C	R	I	P	A	C	I	A	G	E	R	R	Y	G	T	C	I	Y	Q	G	R	L	W	A	F	C	C					
	HNP-3	D	C	Y	C	R	I	P	A	C	I	A	G	E	R	R	Y	G	T	C	I	Y	Q	G	R	L	W	A	F	C	C				
	HNP-4	V	C	S	C	R	L	V	F	C	R	T	E	L	R	V	G	N	C	L	I	G	G	V	S	F	T	Y	C	C	T	R	V		
Guinea pig	GPNP	R	R	C	I	C	T	T	T	C	R	F	P	Y	R	R	L	G	T	C	I	F	Q	N	R	V	Y	T	F	C	C				
Rabbit	NP-1	V	V	C	A	C	R	R	A	L	C	L	P	R	E	R	R	A	G	F	C	R	I	R	G	R	I	H	P	L	C	C	R	R	
	NP-2	V	V	C	A	C	R	R	A	L	C	L	P	L	E	R	R	A	G	F	C	R	I	R	G	R	I	H	P	L	C	C	R	R	
	NP-3A	G	I	C	A	C	R	R	R	F	C	P	N	S	E	R	F	S	G	Y	C	R	V	N	G	A	R	Y	V	R	C	C	S	R	R
	NP-3B	G	R	C	V	C	R	K	Q	L	L	C	S	Y	R	E	R	R	I	G	D	C	K	I	R	G	V	R	F	F	C	C	P	R	
	NP-4	V	S	C	T	C	R	R	F	S	C	G	F	G	E	R	A	S	G	S	C	T	V	N	G	V	R	H	T	L	C	C	R	R	
	NP-5	V	F	C	T	C	R	G	F	L	C	G	S	G	E	R	A	S	G	S	C	T	I	N	G	V	R	H	T	L	C	C	R	R	
Rat	RatNP-1	V	T	C	Y	C	R	R	T	R	C	G	F	R	E	R	L	S	G	A	C	G	Y	R	G	R	I	Y	R	L	C	C	R		
	RatNP-2	V	T	C	Y	C	R	S	T	R	C	G	F	R	E	R	L	S	G	A	C	G	Y	R	G	R	I	Y	R	L	C	C	R		
	RatNP-3	C	S	C	R	T	S	C	R	F	G	E	R	L	S	G	A	C	G	L	N	G	R	I	Y	R	L	C	C						
	RatNP-4	A	C	Y	C	R	I	G	A	C	V	S	G	E	R	L	T	G	A	C	G	L	N	G	R	I	Y	R	L	C	C				
Consensus		C	C	*	C	*	*	*	G	C	*	*	*	G	C	*	*																		

Abstracted from Lehrer, *et al.*, 198

In addition to its defensins, the azurophil granules of human PMNL contain several other polypeptides with antibacterial and antifungal activity.¹⁸⁶ The best studied of these are several isozymes of cathepsin G, a 25–28,000-dalton, highly cationic protein with chymotrypsin-like protease activity,^{197,198} and a more recently described congener of this protein that has been named “azurocidin.”^{199–201} Although both azurocidin and cathepsin G are homologous to a large group of serine proteases, the fungicidal activity of CCCP was retained after inactivation of its protease activity,^{174,197} and azurocidin itself is not enzymatically active. Recently, Shafer *et al.*²⁰² described the presence of several antimicrobial domains in cathepsin G and suggested that they contribute to the antimicrobial effects of the holoprotein. Extension of these studies to azurocidin and to *C. albicans* would be of considerable interest.

Other granulocyte constituents that may also contribute to host defense against fungi include lactoferrin and lysozyme (muramidase). Iron-free (apo)lactoferrin can, by tightly complexing iron necessary for optimal fungal growth, inhibit the growth of *C. albicans in vitro*.⁶³ Apolactoferrin, prepared from human colostrum, has been reported to kill *C. albicans in vitro*.²⁰³ *Coccidioides immitis*²⁰⁴ and *Cryptococcus neoformans*²⁰⁵ are reportedly susceptible to killing by lysozyme, a hydrolase found in granulocytes and macrophages of most species, including man.²⁰⁶ Killing of *C. albicans* by lysozyme is optimal in solutions of low ionic strength,²⁰⁷ and may be facilitated by glucose.²⁰⁸

Finally, nonoxidative killing of *C. albicans* in skin may differ somewhat from that of other tissues. The importance of PMNL (and complement) in host defense against experimental cutaneous candidiasis was established by Ray and Wuepper,^{209,210} but McNamara *et al.*⁶⁴ obtained evidence for the role of a small cytoplasmic protein in antifungal activity. They studied candidal lesions in the skin of mice. A clear zone existed between many of the more superficial pseudohyphae and the PMNL infiltrate in the deep dermis, suggesting that PMNL produced a soluble factor that inhibited the hyphae. Subsequently, they determined that lysates of PMNL contained a 30 kDa protein that was fungistatic for *C. albicans*.^{64,65} The factor differs in several respects from previously described antimicrobial components of PMNL, e.g., it is found in the cytoplasm, not granules, and it appears extracellularly after the death or disruption of the PMNL.⁶⁴ Moreover, it appears to be fungistatic and not fungicidal,⁶⁵ although this has been contested.⁶⁶ It has been postulated that it may play a role in controlling the growth of *Candida* spp. in lesions prior to the time that intact PMNL can exert candidacidal effects.

2.1.3e. Alternation of PMNL Function by C. albicans. Despite the fact that normal PMNL are relatively effective candidacidal agents, the fungus may have considerable potential to subvert PMNL activity. Louria and Brayton²¹¹ demonstrated that phagocytized *C. albicans* yeasts that were not killed by PMNL subsequently germinated, penetrated the cell membrane and actually

grew out of the leukocyte. Diamond *et al.*^{97,212} demonstrated that *C. albicans* hyphae released small peptides, 2500–3000 kDa, which inhibit the adherence process for not only *C. albicans*, but also *Rhizopus* spp., *Aspergillus* spp., and some bacteria. Smail *et al.*^{213,214} reported that a crude hyphal inhibitory product (CHIP) produced by *C. albicans* inhibited superoxide anion production and release of azurophil and specific granule components by FMLP-stimulated PMNL. It is not clear whether or not CHIP and the small peptide(s) described earlier are the same molecules. Hilger and Danley²¹⁵ and Danley *et al.*²¹⁶ noted that PMNL released decreasing amounts of H₂O₂ when incubated with viable yeasts, whereas increasing amounts were released in response to dead organisms. Although inconclusive, the data suggest the possibility that *C. albicans* may somehow modulate PMNL activity. Finally, the intriguing observations of complement receptors on the surface of *C. albicans*^{217–221} have led to various speculations regarding their role in pathogenesis. Receptor expression was reportedly increased when the organisms were grown at glucose levels that prevail in hyperglycemic subjects.^{222,223} A relationship between complement receptors and virulence has been established, but their role in pathogenicity has not been determined definitively.

Finally, PMNL appear to promote phenotypic switching in *C. albicans*,¹⁷⁰ an event which may allow the fungus to escape destruction by the PMNL. Phenotypic switching, a phenomenon first described by Slutsky *et al.*,²²⁴ involves inheritable spontaneous changes in cellular and colonial morphology which occur at a relatively high frequency. The relationship between switching and pathogenicity is problematic at this stage, but, since changes in coagglutination and adherence to epithelial cells occur during switching, it has been suggested that switching may play a role in disease manifestations.²²⁵

2.1.4. Eosinophils

Human eosinophils ingest and kill *C. albicans* *in vitro* at a rate similar to neutrophils and their phagocytic activity also depends on immunoglobulin and complement components.^{162,226,227} Eosinophils from subjects with CGD have an impaired ability to kill *C. albicans*.¹⁶²

2.1.5. Monocytes and Macrophages

2.1.5a. Interactions between Human Mononuclear Cells and C. albicans. In contrast to the strong evidence that identifies PMNL as key cells in innate defenses against systemic *C. albicans* infections, the role of monocyte (MN) and macrophage (MØ) in resistance is not as well defined. Data on interactions of human MØ with *Candida* spp. are relatively limited. The candidacidal activity of MN in patients with various disorders has been studied by relatively few investigators, which is unfortunate given the ease whereby such

studies can be performed.^{96,228} MN from patients with lepromatous leprosy²²⁹ and AIDS²³⁰ were reported to be markedly deficient in their ability to kill *C. pseudotropicalis*. These interesting findings warrant verification and further exploration. Normal human MN were reported to kill $63.4 \pm 10.2\%$ of ingested *C. albicans* in 2.5h when they were tested in the presence of normal PMNL.⁹⁶ Under these conditions, normal human MN also killed $46.5 \pm 3.7\%$ of ingested *C. parapsilosis* and $65.7 \pm 2.9\%$ of ingested *C. pseudotropicalis* in 3h. When normal MN were tested under PMNL-free conditions, they were less effective against *C. albicans* but still killed them about as effectively as purified PMNL. These data indicate that human blood MN have the capacity to contribute significantly to host defense against *C. albicans*.

Human alveolar MØ utilize energy provided by both their oxidative and glycolytic metabolism to ingest *C. albicans*.²³¹ Although they were able to kill ingested *Listeria monocytogenes*, they failed to kill yeast cells of *C. albicans*.^{231,232} Human alveolar MØ killed 18% of *C. pseudotropicalis* in 90 min, with equivalent performances given by cells derived from smokers and nonsmokers.²³³ Alveolar MØ from human bone marrow transplant recipients²³⁴ and from subjects with pulmonary alveolar proteinosis²³⁵ were reported to have a decreased ability to kill ingested *C. pseudotropicalis*. MØ from human milk could ingest *C. albicans* in the presence of milk, but their candidacidal activity was not determined.²³⁶ Studies of tissues from patients with systemic candidiasis have shown damaged-appearing *Candida* within fixed MØ.²³⁷ Although such findings are consistent with the intrinsic fungicidal competence of MØ, they could also result from the uptake of *Candida* cells that had been killed by other host factors. MØ that were derived by cultivating human blood MN *in vitro* retained their ability to take up and digest heat-killed *C. albicans*²³⁸ but lost their ability to kill viable *C. albicans* yeast cells.^{239,240}

Prostaglandin E₁ and theophylline, substances that modulate intracellular cAMP levels, inhibited the candidacidal activity (*C. albicans*) of human PMNL²⁴¹ and MN.⁹⁶ *In vitro*, phenylbutazone was a potent inhibitor of human PMNL⁹⁴ and monocyte candidacidal⁹⁶ and digestive activity.²⁴² As hydrocortisone lacked such activity in granulocytes,^{94,110} the ability of such corticosteroids to inhibit chemotactic entry of leukocytes into *Candida*-infected tissues may underlie its *in vivo* impairment of anti-*Candida* defenses.^{243,244} Corticosteroids were reported to inhibit candidacidal activity by human MN *in vitro* in some experiments²⁴⁵ but not in others.⁹⁶ *Escherichia coli* endotoxin reportedly reduced ingestion and degradation of ¹²⁵I-labeled *C. albicans* by human MN.²⁴⁶

The candidacidal mechanisms of human MN are partially understood, based largely on studies with cells that were obtained from patients with hereditary MPO-deficiency or CGD.⁹⁶ The ability of MPO-deficient MN to kill *C. albicans* was greatly impaired, but such cells killed both *C. parapsilosis* and *C. pseudotropicalis* more effectively than did normal MN. In sharp contrast, MN that were unable to generate O₂⁻ (superoxide anion) and H₂O₂

(obtained from patients with CGD) failed to kill any of these three *Candida* species. Human MN were also shown to contain components that killed *C. parapsilosis* *in vitro*,⁹⁶ but these have not been identified precisely and their participation in MN-mediated anticandidal mechanisms remains to be demonstrated. In summary, the available data indicate that a) normal human MN can kill *C. albicans* at least as effectively as PMNL, b) their candidacidal mechanisms are linked to the production of oxidants, c) the candidacidal mechanisms of human MN are evidently mediated by both MPO-dependent and MPO-independent pathways, and d) human MN contain potentially candidacidal components. Based on the studies with MPO-deficient MN, MPO-dependent oxidative mechanisms appear to be most important with respect to *C. albicans*, while MPO-independent oxidative mechanisms suffice to enable MN to kill *C. parapsilosis* and *C. pseudotropicalis*. It should be noted that the nonoxidative candidacidal effectors discussed previously with respect to human PMNL, including defensins²⁴⁷ and cathepsin G²⁴⁸ are not present, or are present only in small amounts in blood MN.²⁴⁸

2.1.5b. In Vivo Studies of Mononuclear Cell–Candida spp. Interactions in Murine Models. Several investigators have used mice treated with macrophage suppressants such as carrageenan²⁴⁹ or silica^{250,251} to abrogate reticuloendothelial activity, or mice with genetically defective macrophage activity,²⁵² to determine the role of MØ in resistance to systemic candidiasis. Unfortunately, most suppressive treatments induce multiple abnormalities and responses in many genetically altered animals are not limited to a single defect, so that interpretation becomes problematic. For example, carrageenan may increase resistance against systemic candidiasis²⁴⁹ by virtue of the fact that it stimulates granulocytosis. Athymic nude mice, animals that reportedly have increased numbers of activated MØ,²⁵³ are more resistant to an initial challenge with *C. albicans*,²⁵⁴ and, further, Cutler and Poor,⁸⁴ using a unique chamber implanted subcutaneously into mice,²⁵⁵ determined that MØ from nude mice were candidacidal, whereas those from normal mice were only candidastatic. The enhanced resistance was only temporary, and death ultimately occurred from infection. Lee and Balish,²⁵⁰ however, comparing nude mice and their normal littermates treated with silica found no differences between nude and normal mice, i.e., the nude mice were neither more resistant nor more susceptible. Finally, Bistoni *et al.*²⁵⁶ using splenocytes from mice immunized with an avirulent *C. albicans*, transferred protection to recipients challenged with a virulent *C. albicans* with an adherent spleen cell population.

Other experimental approaches have also been adopted in an attempt to define the contributions of MN and MØ in resistance to candidal infections. In many investigations, cyclophosphamide (CY)^{82,257–261} or the related compound, nitrogen mustard^{262,263} were used as the suppressive agents. In all cases cited, CY or nitrogen mustard promoted enhanced mortality or tissue destruction when animals were challenged with *C. albicans*. In one of the

studies,²⁵⁸ the investigators were able to demonstrate striking similarities between *in vivo* susceptibility and depressed *in vitro* measures of immunologic function, including assays for PMNL function, natural killer (NK) cell function, and alloreactivity. Moreover, although CY-treated mice were highly susceptible to *C. albicans* challenge a few days following CY administration, 2–3 weeks following CY administration the animals were actually more resistant than normal to challenge with the fungus. This resistance could be explained on the basis of the rebound effect, i.e., as CY is cleared from the system and cell division proceeds, PMNL are produced at a greater-than-normal rate so that their levels exceed normal values for that interval. Since CY and nitrogen mustard are alkylating agents which nonspecifically damage dividing cells, data based on their use must be interpreted with care. PMNL would certainly be the most severely affected, but MN and other lymphoid cells are affected as well.

A number of other investigations have focused on the ability of macrophage activators such as LPS and *Bordetella pertussis*,²⁶⁴ *Listeria monocytogenes*,²⁶⁵ Bacille Calmette Guerin (BCG),^{251,266,267} *Corynebacterium parvum*,^{266,268} or muramyl dipeptide^{269–271} when administered *in vivo* to increase resistance against an intravenous challenge with a potentially lethal dose of *C. albicans*. On balance, in most studies the stimulator induced resistance to *C. albicans* that was demonstrable immediately after the candidal challenge, but once a chronic infection was initiated, the disease progressed and many additional deaths occurred. In several cases,^{265,270,271} disease progression could be halted if the stimulator was administered repeatedly throughout the course of the experiment.

Some recent observations suggest that immature macrophage precursors may protect mice during experimental *C. albicans* infections. Approximately two weeks after receiving CY, mice developed a highly candidacidal population of spleen cells which were nonadherent to nylon wool and appeared to be macrophage precursors.^{258,272,273} Moreover, a similar population was found in the liver of CY-treated animals²⁷⁴ and in bone marrow cultures established with the L-929 cell line.²⁷⁵ Using these data and observations concerning cell-surface antigens and the effects of colony-stimulating factor, these investigators concluded that a highly candidacidal but immature precursor macrophage population occurred in the spleen, liver and bone marrow. When they were allowed to differentiate into mature MØ, the cells lost their candidacidal properties.^{275,276} The investigators speculated that if colony-stimulating factors were generated *in vivo* during infection, the cells could be maintained in a perpetual, immature (and candidacidal) state that could contribute significantly to anti-*Candida* activity.

Some data concerning *in vivo* candidacidal activity of MØ is available. By 15 min after injection into the tail vein, *C. albicans* could be found within murine hepatic MØ, and after 48h the ingested yeasts displayed altered staining characteristics, and granulomas, possibly glucan-induced, persisted

for weeks.²⁷⁷ Normal rat livers cleared *C. albicans* from perfusates, but their candidacidal activity was negligible. Livers from animals that received prior vaccination with *Corynebacterium parvum* killed approximately 40% of the cleared *C. albicans*. This fungicidal activity was reversed by silica, phenylbutazone, and iodoacetate.²⁶⁸ Phenylbutazone, but not iodoacetate, was reported to inhibit killing of *C. albicans* by human blood MN.⁹⁶ In contrast, iodoacetate, but not phenylbutazone, blocked killing of *C. albicans* by rabbit lung MØ.²⁷⁸ Such discrepancies emphasize the heterogeneity of mononuclear phagocyte fungicidal mechanisms according to host species and/or tissue location.

2.1.5c. Pulmonary Resistance Mediated by Mononuclear Cells in Rabbit and Murine Models. Because *C. albicans* normally resides in the mouth, aspiration of this organism into the lungs probably occurs with some frequency. Nevertheless, pneumonias caused by *C. albicans* are extremely rare, suggesting that the lungs and respiratory tract are well defended against this organism. Blastospores that are injected into peripheral veins of rabbits, which are highly resistant to infection by *C. albicans*, are cleared principally in the lung, while those injected into mesenteric veins are chiefly removed by the liver.⁷⁷ Such hepatic clearance is probably responsible for the initiation of hepatic candidiasis in neutropenic subjects with cancer or leukemia.²⁷⁹⁻²⁸¹

Experimental models have been developed in rabbits and mice to investigate the potential for the alveolar MØ to deal with *C. albicans*. Rabbits that receive up to 10^8 blastospores intratracheally develop a bronchopneumonia that clears within 5 days without leaving residual damage.²⁸² Although the mechanisms responsible for pulmonary resistance are not certain, rabbit PMNL contain large concentrations of defensins,¹⁷⁴ several of which are potentially candidacidal.⁷⁴ Rabbit alveolar MØ can also exert candidastatic and candidacidal activity²⁸³ and possess lysosomal components that are inhibitory to *C. albicans*.²⁸⁴ Peritoneal and alveolar MØ recovered from rabbits that had been stimulated *in vivo* with complete Freund adjuvant (CFA) showed enhanced candidacidal activity relative to their control, unstimulated counterparts.²⁷⁸ Patterson-Delafeld *et al.*²⁸⁵ identified two peptides, initially designated as MCP-1 and MCP-2 (macrophage cationic peptide), in rabbit alveolar MØ. The peptides were potentially candidacidal *in vitro* against *C. albicans* as well as against a variety of gram-positive and gram-negative bacteria. MCP-1 and MCP-2 were later sequenced²⁸⁶ and shown to be structurally identical to two of the six defensins (NP-1 and NP-2) that are expressed in rabbit PMNL.¹⁹³ Neither MCP-1 nor MCP-2 was present in rabbit blood MN or peritoneal MØ, and the peptides were present in greatly reduced amounts in the pulmonary MØ of neonatal rabbits,²⁸⁷ which have a reduced ability to kill ingested *C. albicans*.²⁸⁸ Cell-free fluid recovered from rabbit lungs by bronchoalveolar lavage contains a 10 kDa agglutinin for *C. albicans*²⁸⁹ whose significance for resistance to pulmonary candidiasis is uncertain.

Other investigators have examined candidacidal activity in rabbit MØ as

well. Arai *et al.*²⁹⁰ compared alveolar MØ obtained from normal and *C. albicans*-immunized rabbits. They reported that immune MØ in immune serum displayed the most effective ingestive powers, and that immune and control MØ displayed equivalent candidacidal activity. Another study²⁷⁸ compared resident MØ with MØ elicited by prior *in vivo* injection of CFA. Resident (unelicited) alveolar MØ destroyed approximately 28% of ingested *C. albicans* after 4h, whereas resident peritoneal MØ killed 15% after 4h. Peritoneal MØ from animals pretreated with CFA manifested enhanced candidacidal activity (28% in 4h), and CFA-elicited alveolar MØ killed 32% of ingested *C. albicans* after 4h. In a limited study²⁹¹ of antecedent BCG stimulation, BCG-elicited rabbit peritoneal and alveolar MØ showed candidacidal activity for *C. albicans* that was similar to that of their unstimulated counterparts. In the study in which intracellular vital staining with methylene blue was employed, 42–45% of ingested organisms were killed in 1h. Using an assay based on [³H] leucine incorporation, there was 71–93% inhibition of macromolecular synthesis by *C. albicans* that had been ingested by alveolar MØ. The latter findings were consistent with fungistatic and/or fungicidal activity.²⁸³

In mice, Evans²⁹² reported that *C. albicans* blastospores and hyphae injected intravenously were killed in lungs more effectively than any other organ. Hyphae were eliminated from lung sections by 24h without detectable inflammatory response. Swiss-Webster mice uniformly survived the intratracheal administration of 3×10^6 blastospores, a dosage that killed >85% of the mice if injected intravenously.²⁹³ After a 6h delay, the instilled organisms were cleared rapidly (>90% in 24h), and this rapid pulmonary clearance was inhibited in steroid-treated mice. Intratracheal immunization with *C. albicans* two weeks prior to intratracheal challenge was reported to enhance pulmonary clearance,^{294,295} which was thought to be mediated largely by PMNL recruited into the lungs during the infection.

A potentially important contribution to understanding pulmonary resistance to *Candida* infections was made by Nugent and Fick,²⁹⁶ who reported that cell-free bronchoalveolar lavage fluid from Swiss-Webster mice contained a protein that killed *C. albicans*, *C. tropicalis*, and *C. glabrata*. The protein had an apparent molecular weight of 29 kDa and was not active against *C. parapsilosis* and *C. krusei*. The precise identity of the protein, its cell of origin, and its relationship to similarly sized candidacidal effectors, such as cathepsin G and azurocidin, that have been described in human PMNL remain to be determined.

Several factors contribute to the overall ability of pulmonary mononuclear cells to deal with *C. albicans*. For example, antifungal activity of alveolar MØ may be impaired by antecedent viral infections. Normal mouse alveolar MØ killed 54.5% of *C. krusei* in the presence of nonimmune serum and complement factors, but those from mice with parainfluenza-1 virus infections showed significantly diminished candidacidal ability, despite intact

powers of ingestion.²⁹⁷ Moreover, alveolar MØ obtained from neonatal rhesus monkeys were markedly impaired in their ability to kill *C. albicans* compared to MØ obtained from adult monkeys.²⁹⁸ Impaired candidacidal activity has also been reported in alveolar MØ obtained from neonatal rabbits²⁸⁸ and may be a reflection of the low levels of defensins (MCP-1 and MCP-2) and defensin mRNA in these cells.²⁸⁷

Brummer and Stevens²⁹⁹ demonstrated that although resident murine pulmonary MØ lacked the ability to kill ingested *C. albicans* blastospores, MØ that had been cultured overnight with lymph node cells and concanavalin A (con A) or con A-splenocyte supernatants killed 24–43% of the organisms. Recombinant interferon-gamma (IFN- γ) failed to activate candidacidal activity in these MN, although it markedly enhanced the candidacidal performance of peritoneal MØ obtained from the same animals.

2.1.5d. Interaction of Murine Peritoneal Mononuclear Cells with C. albicans. Murine peritoneal MØ have been used in the majority of studies dealing with the activities of animal MØ against *C. albicans*. In an early study with resident mouse peritoneal MØ that had been grown in tissue culture medium for 24h, Stanley and Hurley³⁰⁰ found that the cells rapidly ingested six species of *Candida* in the presence of 10–20% homologous serum and that within 2h, intracellular replication by germ tubes (*C. albicans*) or budding (other *Candida* spp.) had occurred. By 24h, MØ cultured with *C. albicans* or *C. tropicalis* had been destroyed, while those incubated with *C. parapsilosis*, *C. pseudotropicalis*, *C. krusei*, and *C. guilliermondii* remained viable for an additional 24–48h. The authors concluded that MØ were unlikely to contribute substantially toward host defenses against disseminated candidal infections. Ozato and Uesake³⁰¹ used [³H] leucine or [³H] uridine uptake with radioautography to study the ability of caseinate-elicited mouse peritoneal MØ to inhibit *C. albicans*. By 2h, ingested organisms displayed no isotope uptake, despite significant incorporation by extracellular fungi. Intracellular growth of *C. albicans* commenced by 3h and resulted in rapid destruction of the MØ.

In a murine model⁸⁴ wherein diffusion chambers with different pore sizes (0.45 and 3 microns) were implanted intraperitoneally, killing of *C. albicans* required phagocytic cells. Thioglycollate-induced peritoneal MØ from BALB/c mice restricted growth of *C. albicans* but did not kill them. MØ from nude mice reduced the number of *C. albicans* by 80–90% in 24h when added at high (> 40:1) macrophage:yeast cell ratios.

An *in vitro* colony-counting assay was used to compare resident peritoneal MØ with cells obtained from LPS- or BCG-treated mice.³⁰² Resident MØ killed 10% of *C. albicans* in 3h, compared with 27% for LPS-elicited cells and 23% for BCG-elicited cells. In contrast, *C. parapsilosis* was killed much more efficiently, as follows: resident MØ, 72%; LPS-elicited cells, 84%; and BCG-elicited cells, 81%. Muramyl dipeptide, a synthetic adjuvant, increased fungicidal activity of overnight-cultured mouse peritoneal MØ against *C.*

*albicans in vivo*²⁶⁹ and *C. parapsilosis in vitro*.³⁰³ Maiti *et al.*³⁰⁴ also showed that peritoneal MØ obtained from BCG-vaccinated Swiss mice more effectively resisted the intracellular germination of ingested *C. albicans* than did MØ obtained from control mice and that exposure of the MØ to crude lymphokine mixtures enhanced their candidastatic properties. The ability of most ingested *C. albicans* blastospores to survive after their ingestion by resident peritoneal mouse MØ cannot be ascribed to the failure of phagosome-lysosome fusion.³⁰⁵

Brummer *et al.*³⁰⁶ demonstrated that murine MØ pulsed overnight with recombinant murine IFN- γ , but not with LPS, exhibited significantly enhanced fungicidal activity against *C. albicans*, relative to control MØ that had been incubated overnight with medium (44% versus 0% killing). Enhanced candidacidal activity was also observed when the MØ were treated with supernatants from con A-treated spleen cells or with con A itself. This effect was abrogated by including antibody to IFN- γ in the incubation mixtures. Kolotila *et al.*³⁰⁷ demonstrated that *in vivo* (intraperitoneal) administration of con A to mice enhanced the candidacidal activity of their peritoneal MØ and described sex and strain-specific factors that influenced macrophage performance.

2.1.5e. Summary. In summary, most of the *in vitro* data suggest that activated MØ are more candidacidal than resident cells.^{299,302,304,307–310} Unheated serum, with or without *Candida*-specific antibody, promoted phagocytosis,^{77,127,268,290,309} but did not appear to increase killing capacity.^{127,290} Despite the fact that activated cells appear to be more candidacidal than resident cells, the level of killing observed is modest, even by activated cells, and suggests that many *Candida* survive their initial encounter with these cells. The implications of these seemingly “low” levels of leukocyte-mediated killing on clearing foci of *C. albicans* from infected tissues is considered in Section 2.1.7. Although much remains to be learned about the mechanisms by which MØ kill *Candida* spp., they are likely to include oxygen-dependent^{96,240,302,311} and oxygen-independent pathways^{96,278,284,285,311–313} whose primacy may vary according to the cell’s site and species of origin²⁶¹ and their state of activation. Genetic or sex differences such as those observed among mouse strains may also contribute.^{272,307} Consequently, the often divergent data summarized in these studies may have multiple causes in addition to those mentioned previously, which include use of different assay conditions, effector: target ratios, incubation periods, viability tests, etc.

2.1.6. NK Cells

Evidence describing potential interactions of NK cells with other host cells and *C. albicans* is reviewed elsewhere in this volume and will not be discussed here.

2.1.7. Overview of Cellular Defenses

Elimination of infections caused by *C. albicans* will occur over time if the organisms are killed more rapidly than they reproduce. The experimental data reviewed above demonstrates that phagocytic cells, specifically PMNL, MN, and MØ, have the ability to kill a fraction of the *C. albicans* that they encounter. This fraction may vary from 10 to 50% or more, depending on the type of phagocyte and the experimental conditions employed. A feature (some would say defect) of the *in vitro* assays used to derive these data is that they measure only the initial results of the interaction between the fungus and phagocyte(s). *In vivo*, fungi that survive the initial round of this struggle undoubtedly continue to encounter additional phagocytes until the issue is resolved. Although a net reduction in the number of fungi by 15% or 20% per phagocytic encounter may not seem a highly promising foundation for host defense, the theoretical calculations illustrated in Fig. 1 suggest otherwise. In composing this figure, it was assumed that the average battle cycle between an individual *C. albicans* and a phagocyte lasted for 6h, and that four such interactions occurred each day for each surviving organism. The curves indicate overall *C. albicans* survival, and are predicated on net reductions of 5%, 10%, or 15% of the organisms/cycle. Note that as little as 15% net killing/cycle would effectively clear the infection within a week. Although Figure 4.1 is theoretical, it suggests how relatively small degrees of enhanced candidacidal activity could reap large "dividends" in overall host resistance and why a system that combines candidastatic and modestly effective candidacidal components normally has such high efficacy.

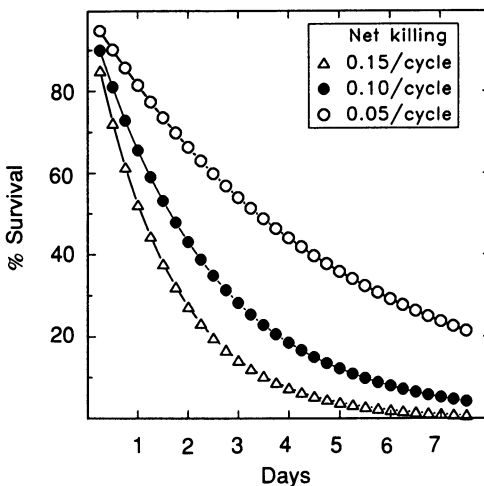


FIGURE 1. This figure is a hypothetical curve for the clearance kinetics of a hypothetical population of *C. albicans* subjected to 4 daily cycles of combat with host phagocytes. To construct these curves, it was assumed that each cycle of *Candida*-phagocyte interaction lasted for 6 h (4 cycles/day) and resulted in the net killing of 5% (○), 10% (●), or 15% (△) of the surviving organisms/cycle. The curves show that "nibbling away" at organisms in this manner can eliminate them and also that relatively small increases in net killing efficiency would greatly accelerate clearance.

2.2. Acquired Immune Responses

2.2.1. Protective Immunity

Despite the fact that a number of investigators have been attempting for many years to dissect specific immune responses to *Candida* spp. to determine their relationship to protection, protective immunity in candidiasis remains an enigma. Confusion over this issue relates to several problems. First, many researchers have investigated innate immunity and attempted to extrapolate the data to acquired immunity. Secondly, several investigations have been carried out wherein mice have been immunized with nonviable blastoconidia^{294,314–316} or subcellular preparations^{314,315,317,318} of *C. albicans*, which likely have no relevance to the development of protective immunity in the intact individual. In general, greater protective responses have been achieved when animals were immunized with viable preparations of virulent^{319,320} or avirulent²⁵⁶ organisms. Thirdly, it has been recognized only recently that protective immunity against mucocutaneous candidiasis appears to differ fundamentally from that against systemic disease. Fourthly, since defense against primary fungal pathogens such as *Histoplasma capsulatum* and *Coccidioides immitis*, organisms that produce systemic disease, was determined early on to be primarily cell-mediated, there was a built-in bias that immunity in candidiasis should also be cell mediated. The accumulated evidence, however, as summarized below, favors the interpretation that protective immunity in candidiasis is a complex response involving both cellular and humoral mechanisms in conjunction with innate immunity, especially the PMNL. Cellular immunity appears to be more critical in defense against mucocutaneous disease, as summarized in Chapter 5, than against systemic disease.

Evidence supporting a role for antibody in protection against systemic candidiasis has been provided at several levels, namely, immunization designed to elicit antibody prior to challenge,^{315,321} reports of transfer of protective responses to naive recipients with serum from immunized animals,^{321–324} treatments intended to abrogate the ability of animals to produce antibody prior to immunization and challenge,^{325,326} and the correlation of clinical conditions in humans with an antibody response to a specific antigen detected by the Western blotting technique.³²⁷ None of the data have provided definitive proof of the assertion that antibody is protective, however.

For example, in the studies by Mourad and Friedman,³²² antibody was administered repeatedly, and when antibody administration was terminated, mice began dying at a rate similar to that of the controls. In the studies by Pearsall *et al.*,³²⁴ assessment of protection involved the measurement of the thickness of the thigh, comparing treated and control animals; no cultural assays were performed. Since Moser and Domer³²⁵ have shown that two lesions of equal volume can contain very different numbers of organisms, it is not clear whether or not lesion size is an accurate reflection of protection.

Further, Scheld *et al.*³²¹ were not actually investigating systemic candidiasis, they were working with a model of experimental endocarditis. In such a model, where attachment to the target tissue would be critical to the establishment of disease, one can readily envision the prevention of disease in the presence of antibody to surface antigens. The CY model employed by Moser and Domer,³²⁵ wherein the CY was administered in such a way as to abrogate antibody production but leave cellular immunity intact, provides circumstantial data supporting the role of antibody, as does the study of Matthews *et al.*³²⁷

Perhaps the model that held the most promise initially in experimental efforts to determine the role of antibody in protection was that involving anti- μ treatment of mice.³²⁶ Here again, however, the data did not provide a definitive answer to the question. Female mice treated with anti- μ were partially protected after immunization but male mice were not. Female mice are innately more resistant to *C. albicans* than males,³²⁸ and the data support the hypothesis that the innate defenses, antibody and cellular immunity are all necessary to complete protection against systemic candidiasis. Several studies involving immunosuppressed animals performed in a single laboratory are summarized in Table III to illustrate the fact that both T cells and antibody appear to be important in successful defense against *C. albicans*, but that the specific role of each has not yet been identified.

Although the studies described above would suggest a role for antibody in protection, there are examples in the literature of studies that illustrate just the opposite.^{329–331} Moreover, attempts to illustrate the involvement of antibody in killing *in vitro* have yielded conflicting data. Morelli and Rosenberg¹²³ and Morrison and Cutler¹²⁷ found no evidence for enhanced intracellular killing in the presence of *C. albicans*-specific antibody, whereas Maiti *et al.*³⁰⁴ and Pereira and Hosking¹³² found that immune serum enhanced killing.

Included in Table III are data from a study involving mice thymectomized and irradiated at an early age, then reconstituted with bone marrow.³³² Such mice were neither innately more susceptible nor more resistant to *C. albicans*, but neither were they protected against systemic challenge following immunization. It is clear from this study and others^{330,333–336} that the T lymphocyte is involved in acquired immunity, but its precise role remains to be elucidated. In the two most recent publications,^{335,336} mice immunized with an avirulent mutant and then challenged with a virulent mutant were given anti-L3T4 or anti-Lyt-2.2 after immunization and immediately prior to reinfection for assessment of a protective response. As assessed by quantitative culture of kidneys, the antibody-treated mice were significantly more susceptible to the virulent *C. albicans* than were mice treated with medium alone. Taking all the data into consideration, however, the effect of the anti-T cell reagents or T-cell products seemed to be one involving the kinetics of the response not the final outcome, in that even the animals treated with anti-T cell reagents eventually cleared *C. albicans* from their tissues.

TABLE III
Correlation of Protective Immune Response to *C. albicans*
with Demonstrable Antibody to Cytoplasmic Substances or DH

	Sex	14-28 days post-IV		DH	Protection	Reference
		CIE +/TOTAL	ELISA			
Normal						320
Imm	M	36/39	2.73 (0.17)	Yes	Yes	
Unimm	M		1.70 (0.00)	No	No	
Thymectomized (TX)						332
TX Imm	M	2/30		No	No	
sham Imm	M	13/30		Yes	Yes	
normal Imm	M	41/90		Yes	Yes	
Cyclophosphamide (CY)-treated						325
CY Imm	M	3/36		Yes	No	
normal Imm	M	35/42		Yes	Yes	
Anti- μ (μ)-treated						326
μ Imm	M	0/5	0.30 (0.30)	Yes	No	
μ Imm	F	0/6	0.17 (0.17)	Yes	Partial	
μ Unimm	M	0/6	0	No	No	
μ Unimm	F	0/10	0.17 (0.17)	No	No	
Mock-Imm	M	7/7	2.88 (0.09)	Yes	Yes	
Mock-Imm	F	7/7	2.68 (0.20)	Yes	Yes	
Mock-Unimm	M	0/10	0.30 (0.30)	No	No	
Mock-Unimm	F	0/11	0	No	No	

In conjunction with studies attempting to detail the role of lymphoid cells in resistance to infection or reinfection, some investigators have considered lymphokine production,^{335,337} lymphokine administration,³³⁸ or transfer of immunity with crude mixtures such as dialyzable leukocyte extract.³³⁹ Neutralization of endogenous IFN- γ slowed the rate of clearance of *C. albicans* in immunized animals,³³⁶ but the administration of exogenous IFN- γ to unimmunized mice challenged with *C. albicans* was somewhat suppressive, resulting in increased growth of the organism in selected tissues.³³⁸ Administration of IFN- γ to immunized mice had no effect, however. The administration of human dialyzable leukocyte extract to mice, effective in only a few instances, appeared to result from nonspecific effects of the extracts.³³⁹ Studies involving the administration of various cytokines to animals in attempts to modify their responses to *C. albicans* are in their infancy, and data generated by such studies are difficult to interpret. It is clear that multiple cytokines are produced during immune responses and several have been shown to have synergistic effects *in vitro*. Only after considerably more is known of *in vivo* cytokine production, can the effects of exogenously applied cytokines be evaluated effectively.

Since the delayed hypersensitivity (DH) response is a measure of one aspect of cellular immunity, several investigators have based their conclusions on the role of T lymphocytes in protection on correlations between DH levels and protection. Kagaya *et al.*,³⁴⁰ Sinha *et al.*,³⁴¹ Cenci *et al.*,³³⁵ and Ashman³⁴² have all suggested that since DH levels parallel resistance, cell-mediated immunity is clearly involved in protection. Hurtrel *et al.*,³⁴³ however, noted an absence of correlation between DH and protective immunity in the murine system. Unfortunately, the reagents that are used to abrogate T-cell activity do not appear to be highly selective for subsets of T cells, and until it has been clearly established that the T cells involved in DH are the same as those involved in protection, conclusions regarding the relationship between DH and protection are premature.

As indicated previously, a number of investigators have attempted to determine the role of lymphoid cells in protection by assessing response to a primary exposure to *C. albicans* in immunologically modified animals.^{72,134,254,333,341,344-351} In many instances, the defects observed, both in genetically deficient animals and in artificially induced immunologically modified animals, are multiple and interpretation of the data is complicated. For example, Cutler²⁵⁴ and Rogers *et al.*³⁴⁶ both reported enhanced resistance to primary challenge in congenitally athymic mice, thus suggesting that T cells were not critical to defense against *C. albicans*. On closer inspection, however, the resistance observed was evaluated after challenge with either low or high levels of *C. albicans*, and the data could be explained on the basis of increased numbers of activated macrophages observed in athymic mice, not necessarily T lymphocytes. Interestingly, Mahanty *et al.*,³⁴⁹ working with the severe combined immunodeficient mouse model, noted little difference between normal and immunodeficient mice and concluded that neither T nor B cells were necessary for innate resistance to a primary challenge with *C. albicans*. Recently, Cantorna and Balish⁷² found that only congenitally deficient mice that were defective in both T-cell activity and phagocytic activity were susceptible to the development of mucosal candidiasis that spread systemically.

Finally, several groups of researchers^{138,347,350,352-357} have taken a genetic approach to investigations of innate murine susceptibility to *C. albicans*. Not surprisingly, resistant and susceptible mouse strains have been identified and genes affecting the response have been mapped both within^{347,356} and outside³⁵⁴ the major histocompatibility complex. Despite the fact that there are clear differences in innate susceptibility, protective responses following immunization could be demonstrated in all 6 mouse strains investigated by Hector *et al.*¹³⁸ An interesting new development in studies of this type is the observation that one strain of genetically susceptible mouse, the CBA/H strain, develops not only weaker pathologic and immune responses to *C. albicans*, but their cells can also be stimulated *in vitro* to develop autoreactive cells, i.e., cells that, when then administered *in vivo*, are cytotoxic to apparently unaltered syngeneic host cells.³⁵⁷ They suggest that "molecular mim-

icry" exists between *C. albicans* and host tissue antigens, which may contribute to pathogenesis. Since in-depth genetic studies of resistance to *Candida* spp. are a relatively recent innovation, it is not yet clear how they apply specifically to innate versus acquired defenses.

2.2.2. Immunoregulation

It is clear from clinical data³⁵⁸ that some patients with candidiasis have depressed immune function, especially cellular immunity, demonstrable *in vivo* as skin testing for DH, or *in vitro* by lymphocyte stimulation assays. The most profound immunosuppressive effects are usually *Candida* specific, but some patients show generalized or partial anergy when tested with noncandidal antigens. The relationship between suppressed activity and disease is not clear, in that cause and effect relationships have not been defined. Most patients in whom suppressed responses have been described have had mucocutaneous, not systemic, disease, either in the form of chronic mucocutaneous candidiasis³⁵⁸ or recurrent vaginitis.³⁵⁹ The fact that the clinical observations are skewed toward mucocutaneous disease may be misleading with respect to the candidal immunoregulatory phenomena in general, however, in that patients with systemic candidiasis, in contrast to those with mucocutaneous disease, are often not evaluated immunologically.

The working hypothesis for researchers investigating immunoregulatory phenomena is that one or more components of *C. albicans* seeps into the circulation and initiates a series of events that culminate in reduced immunologic activity. In fact, serum factors, presumably responsible for some or all of the immunosuppression observed, have been found in many patients. The nature of the putative inhibitors has not been defined clearly in each case, but there is evidence³⁵⁸ that a polysaccharide, in some instances mannan specifically, may have been the cause of the immunosuppression in a subset of the patients. Contrary to the polysaccharide theory, however, in the one instance where patients with disseminated disease were investigated,¹³⁵ the immunosuppressive agent in the sera of seven patients appeared to be immunoglobulin. The inhibitor in the sera of those patients was demonstrated in a PMNL candidacidal assay. When patient sera were included in the assay, candidacidal activity was reduced from a mean of approximately 18% to < 5% in most cases. Moreover absorption of patient sera with heat-killed *C. albicans* abrogated suppressive effects.

Experimental, as opposed to clinical, data in support of a role for *C. albicans* or components thereof in immunomodulation, have been generated in both *in vitro* lymphoproliferative^{360–369} or antibody generating assays,^{365,370,371} and in *in vivo* systems.^{372–379} The *in vivo* studies were designed to investigate the immunomodulatory effects of various cell wall extracts on both *Candida*-specific^{376,379,380} and noncandidal immune responses.^{372–375,377,378}

Two types of *in vitro* assays have been used to demonstrate immuno-

regulatory phenomena associated with *C. albicans* or extracts thereof. First, human lymphocytes have been employed in lymphocyte stimulation (LS) assays,^{366,381} and secondly, murine lymphoid cells have been used in LS or antibody plaque-forming cell (PFC) assays.^{364,365} The assays with the human lymphocytes have been difficult to interpret in some instances because many humans have cellular immunity specific for *C. albicans*, and frequently investigators did not determine the underlying sensitivity patterns of their patients. For example, Piccolella *et al.*³⁸¹ reported on the "mitogenic" effect of an extract designated MPPS (Mangion purified polysaccharide) for human lymphocytes, which was in all likelihood *Candida*-specific stimulation. With that caveat in mind, however, using the human lymphocyte-MPPS system, the generation of suppressor cells was demonstrated,³⁶³ as well as the production of a nonspecific inhibitor, which blocked interleukin-1 and depressed interleukin-2 production in 5–6-day cultures.³⁸²

In vivo and *in vitro* murine assays used for investigating immunoregulatory phenomena associated with *C. albicans* or its components are summarized in Table IV. The *in vitro* studies, done initially with formalin-killed cells as modulators, and later with a dithiothreitol cell wall extract, have resulted in the identification of both suppressor B lymphocytes^{364,365} and antigen-nonspecific suppressor T lymphocytes.^{370,371} The suppressor T cells were capable of inhibiting both primary and secondary *in vitro* antibody responses to the T-dependent antigen sheep erythrocytes (SRBC), and the lymphocytes were determined to be L3T4+, Ly-1+ and Lyt-2-. The antibody response to T-independent antigens, trinitrophenyl-LPS (type I) or trinitrophenyl-Ficoll (type II), were unaffected by the suppressor cell.

The *in vivo* studies have been targeted to investigations of immunoregulatory phenomena associated with both *Candida*-specific and non-*Candida*-specific responses. The initial studies were with whole fungal cells predominantly involving evaluations of nonspecific activity against T-cell dependent antigens or mitogens. Conflicting data were observed, in that Vardinon and Segal³⁷³ noted suppression of anti-SRBC antibody responses, whereas Cutler and Lloyd³⁷⁵ noted enhancement. Only suppression was observed with respect to T cell mitogens.³⁶⁴ When soluble extracts were employed, enhancement of antibody responses to noncandidal antigens was noted in all cases where the extracts were glucomannoprotein complexes,^{375,378} but when cell wall extracts devoid of the glucan component, i.e., mannan or mannoprotein,³⁸³ were tested, antibody responses were either enhanced or suppressed.³⁷⁷ The specific type of modulation observed was dependent on the size and charge of the component molecules within the mannan extract. Podzorski *et al.*³⁶⁸ and Podzorski *et al.*³⁶⁹ have obtained similar data *in vitro* with human lymphocytes and mannan extracts, i.e., extracts containing saccharides with > 7 saccharide units were stimulatory to lymphocytes from *C. albicans*-sensitized individuals, whereas oligosaccharides with ≤ 6 mannose residues were suppressive.

TABLE IV
Murine Model Systems used for the Demonstration of
the Immunodulatory Capacity of *C. albicans* or Components thereof

Modulator	Extraction	Assay	Antigen/mitogen	Effect
<i>In vivo</i> models				
Live cells ³⁷³	N/A	PFC	SRBC	Suppression
Live or killed ³⁷⁵ cells, cell walls, wall polysaccharide	N/A	PFC	SRBC, CCG-HE	Enhancement in all cases
Formalin-killed ³⁶⁴ cells	Phenol			
	N/A	LS	PHA Con A LPS	Suppression Suppression No effect
Cell-wall glycoprotein ³⁷⁶	Ethylenediamine	DH	Cell-wall glycoprotein	Suppression
Mannan ³⁷⁷	Peat method	PFC	SSS-III and SRBC	Enhancement and suppression to both antigens
Cell-wall glycoprotein, and peptidoglucomannan ³⁷⁸	Ethylenediamine	PFC	SSS-III and SRBC	Enhancement in all cases
Mannan ³⁷⁹	NaOH			
<i>In vitro</i> models	Peat method	DH	Mannan	Suppression
Formalin-killed cells ³⁶⁵	N/A	LS	PHA LPS	Suppression No effect
		PFC	SRBC	Suppression
Formalin-killed cells ³⁷⁰	N/A	PFC	SRBC	Suppression
			TNP-LPS	No effect
			TNP-FicolI	No effect
Cell-wall extract ³⁷¹	Dithiothreitol	MLR		No effect
		PFC	SRBC	Suppression

Abbreviations: N/A, not applicable; PFC, antibody plaque-forming cell assay; SRBC, sheep erythrocytes; CCG-HE, chicken gamma globulin-horse erythrocytes; LS, lymphocyte stimulation; PHA, phytohemagglutinin; Con A, concanavalin A; LPS, lipopolysaccharide; DH, delayed hypersensitivity; SSS-III, pneumococcal polysaccharide type III; TNP-LPS, trinitrophenyllipopolysaccharide; TNP-FicolI, trinitrophenyl-FicolI; MLR, mixed lymphocyte reaction.

When soluble extracts, specifically glucomannoprotein³⁷⁶ or mannoprotein,³⁷⁹ were investigated for their potential to modulate *C. albicans*-specific cellular immunity, mannan-specific responses were suppressed but immune responses detectable with antigens that did not contain mannan were unaffected. The cell responsible for mannan-specific suppression is Thy 1.2+, Ly-1-, and Ly2.1+.³⁸⁰ Since mannan has been shown to bind to human T lymphocytes,³⁸⁴ binding of the polysaccharide to murine T cells may initiate the suppressor cell phenomenon. Mannan may actually exert its effect at several levels of the immune response, however. For example, Fischer *et al.*³⁸⁵ have shown defective handling of mannan by MN, and Wright *et al.*³⁸⁶ demonstrated inhibitory effects of mannan on PMNL function.

In summary, there is good evidence that subcellular components of *C. albicans* circulate during bouts of serious candidiasis and that suppression of *Candida*-specific and, occasionally, noncandidal immune responses occurs. The nature of the subcellular component may vary, but mannan is a good candidate for at least some of the immunosuppressive activity noted. Mannan can be immunosuppressive in experimental models, depending on the size and charge of the molecules involved, but it can also enhance immune responses, as can all cell wall extracts known to contain glucan as well as mannan tested to date. The mechanisms responsible for suppression have been identified as B and T lymphocytes, depending on the modulator and assay conditions but may also involve mononuclear cells and PMNL. Absolute correlation between the phenomena observed during clinical disease and those observed in model systems cannot be made at this time; additional data from both humans and animal models are needed.

2.3. Immunodiagnosis and Prognosis

The value of serology in the diagnosis of systemic candidiasis remains an enigma, despite the accumulation of 30 years of data on antibody responses and antigen detection. It was recognized early that both colonized and infected individuals regularly produced antibody, i.e., agglutinins, to surface immunogens of *C. albicans*.³⁸⁷ Since it appeared that agglutinin production would be of little value in separating colonized individuals from those with systemic disease, Taschdjian *et al.*³⁸⁸ proposed that cytoplasmic antigens would be released from phagocytic cells following ingestion and killing or after senescent extracellular cells died in deep tissues. Considerable effort has been expended, therefore, on attempting to diagnose invasive disease by detecting anticytoplasmic antibodies. Unfortunately, it has proven difficult to correlate cytoplasm-specific antibody levels with disease state, and the search for the unequivocal serological test for the diagnosis of systemic candidiasis continues.

There have been a number of reviews in recent years devoted to, or including, serodiagnosis of candidiasis,^{5,17,389-391} some of which contain comprehensive coverage of the historical aspects of the development and

application of various immunologic assays. More recently, emphasis has been placed on qualitative rather than quantitative antibody assays and on antigen detection; these aspects of candidal serology will be emphasized below.

In order to develop a definitive test for the serodiagnosis of candidiasis, the investigator must keep several aspects of the disease firmly in mind:

1. Although there are many divisions into which one can place the clinical manifestations of candidiasis, basically there are two broad categories, i.e., cutaneous/mucocutaneous and systemic, and any serodiagnostic technique developed must distinguish between systemic and more superficial forms of the disease.
2. In both types of disease the immune system is exposed to several different forms of the fungus, namely, blastospores (yeasts), pseudo-hyphae, and hyphae. There is good evidence to suggest that antigens unique to blastospores or hyphae occur at both the cytoplasmic³⁹²⁻³⁹⁴ and cell wall levels.³⁹⁵⁻³⁹⁸ and that the expression of surface antigens is variable under various conditions of growth³⁹⁹⁻⁴⁰¹ as well as during morphogenesis.⁴⁰⁰ Moreover, it was shown many years ago that at least two serotypes of *C. albicans* occur based on the surface antigen, mannan,^{37,402} and since *C. albicans* serotype A is not the only *Candida* spp. capable of causing disease, there are concerns that serodiagnostic tests developed with *C. albicans* serotype A may not be applicable to all *Candida* spp. Therefore, not only is the selection of antigen for the serodiagnostic test critical, but the time during the course of disease at which sera are obtained from patients is also critical.
3. The patients from whom sera are being obtained for serodiagnostic tests are frequently immunosuppressed and may have low or non-existent levels of antibody.
4. The results of many studies in which investigators were attempting to determine the validity of cytoplasmic rather than cell wall extracts as antigens are called into question by the observation that cytoplasmic extracts, whether commercially obtained or prepared in-house, often contain mannan.^{403,404}
5. The interpretation of data from many studies is complicated because each investigator tends to use his or her own definition of clinical conditions. For example, if candidemia, a condition that may or may not lead to systemic disease, is included in the category of systemic candidiasis, the conclusions drawn from the data may be quite different than if candidemia is considered separately from truly invasive disease.

2.3.1. Antibody Assays

A number of different techniques have been employed to detect anti-cytoplasmic antibodies in the sera of patients suspected of having, or with proven, systemic candidiasis, including double immunodiffusion (ID) and

latex agglutination (LA),⁴⁰⁵ counterimmunoelectrophoresis (CIE),⁴⁰⁶ crossed immunoelectrophoresis (XIE),⁴⁰⁷ and enzyme immunoassay (ELISA).^{408,409} Odds¹⁷ catalogued the known studies up to 1988. It is clear that most healthy individuals do not have antibodies to cytoplasmic antigens, even when a particularly sensitive assay such as ELISA was used. To the contrary, many individuals with other diseases, fungal and nonfungal, have antibodies detectable by each of these assays, the highest number of false negatives occurring when the LA assay was used. The assay showing the least false negatives was XIE; it is also the most difficult of the assays listed to perform and adapt to the routine diagnostic laboratory.

The one assay that has probably been most helpful as a diagnostic aid has been CIE.⁴¹⁰⁻⁴¹⁶ Therefore, several laboratories have developed modifications of this technique in attempts to improve its usefulness further. First, Syverson *et al.*⁴¹⁷ reported that the positive predictive value could be increased from 31% to 71% when using XIE. This is a technique involving electrophoresis in two directions. The antigenic mixture is separated in one direction first, then electrophoresed through two additional gels in sequence; the first contains con A to remove mannan and the second contains the patient's serum. Additional studies with this technique supported the claim that if precipitins were detected in the sera of patients after its passage through con A, those patients had high likelihoods of having systemic candidiasis.⁴¹⁸

A second modification of CIE, designated co-CIE, which has proven useful in some hands^{419,420} but not others,⁴²¹ was developed in France. This assay involves the demonstration of lines of identity between precipitin reactions resulting from positive control antisera and selected antigenic extracts and those resulting from patient sera tested against the same extracts. The precipitin reaction which appeared most promising is that between a "somatic" antigen, i.e., a soluble antigen prepared as a water extract of whole disrupted cells, and an antiserum generated against germ tubes of *C. albicans*. Unfortunately, in the studies designed to evaluate this technique, a distinction was not made between candidal septicemia and true systemic candidiasis and the value of this technique as a diagnostic and prognostic aid remains to be confirmed.

Because of the difficulty in interpretation of the serologic assays available commercially as kits or for which component reagents are available, one of the major emphases in the last ten years has been on attempting to identify one or more immunodominant antigens to which all or most individuals with systemic candidiasis, but not with superficial colonization or candidemia, would produce antibody. To demonstrate such antigens, most investigators have used immunoblotting, i.e., the Western blotting technique, wherein candidal antigens are electrophoresed in agarose gel and then incubated in patient sera. Reactions between patient sera and selected antigens in the electrophoretic profile are detected by radioimmunoassay or enzyme-linked

immunoassay. Jones⁴²² was the first to report on a candidate antigen of this type in yeast extracts, and several additional groups subsequently reported similar findings in either yeast^{423–425} or mycelial^{425,426} extracts. There seems to be general agreement among these five investigative groups that most patients with systemic candidiasis produce antibody to an antigen in the 43–54 kDa range, and Porsius *et al.*⁴²⁷ recently reported that intense reactions to a 47 kDa and a 68 kDa antigen were more often associated with sera from 15 patients with disseminated candidiasis than with sera from 12 individuals who were only colonized. It is not clear whether or not each group of investigators has identified the same antigen in the 43–54 kDa range since no comparative studies have been reported, although the data obtained by Strockbine *et al.*⁴²⁶ would seem to indicate that their 48 kDa antigen is different from the 54 kDa antigen of Greenfield and Jones.⁴²⁸ Strockbine *et al.*⁴²⁶ isolated their antigen from mycelial cells, whereas Greenfield and Jones⁴²⁸ isolated theirs from yeast cells.

Greenfield and Jones⁴²⁸ purified their major cytoplasmic antigen, the source of which was yeast cells, using column chromatography with an ion exchange resin followed by con A-sepharose. The purified protein had a molecular weight of 54,300, had 432 amino acid residues, was electrophoretically pure, but had some low level contaminating proteins demonstrable by XIE. When tested for enzymic activity, it was inactive against 19 substrates for common cellular enzymes. Strockbine *et al.*⁴²⁶ have been attempting to characterize their 48 kDa antigen as well. Initially, it was thought to be actin because preparations of the 48 kDa antigen obtained contained actin. When purified actin was compared to the 48 kDa antigen, however, it was clear that the two proteins were not identical.⁴²⁹ Subsequently, they demonstrated that the protein was enolase.⁴³⁰ In support of the enolase data, Franklyn *et al.*⁴³¹ prepared cDNA from *C. albicans* yeasts which encoded a portion of the 48 kDa antigen and determined from the deduced amino acid sequence that the 48 kDa protein was an enolase. The 47 kDa antigen of Matthews *et al.*⁴³² was isolated from patient sera by affinity chromatography using rabbit antisera prepared against a cell homogenate, and by using affinity-purified antibody and immunoelectron microscopy, Matthews *et al.*⁴³³ located the 47 kDa antigen in selected areas within the cell wall and in the peripheral aspects of the cytoplasm.

Despite the studies suggesting a correlation between production of antibody to specific antigens and disease classification, there are reports from other laboratories that are not in agreement with that hypothesis. Manning-Zweerink *et al.*,⁴³⁴ Reen,⁴³⁵ and Weller *et al.*,⁴³⁶ for example, were unable to correlate qualitative antibody responses with clinical condition. In fact, Weller *et al.*⁴³⁶ observed that both controls and patients made antibody to the 47 kDa antigen. Their primary objective was to evaluate sera from individuals with superficial candidiasis, and they concluded that such individuals responded to antigens of 29, 32, 38, and 65 kDa. Moreover, Greenfield *et al.*,⁴³⁷ following

a series of patients undergoing induction chemotherapy for acute leukemia, found few instances of antibody to their 54 kDa antigen during episodes of invasive candidiasis. It is clear that the identification of immunodominant antigens and their diagnostic and prognostic value for systemic candidiasis remains controversial, although it does hold some promise for the future, perhaps as antigen to which antibodies can be generated for detection of antigenemia.⁴³⁸

It has been suggested that antibodies to germ tube antigens may be more diagnostic of active disease than those specific for yeasts only, and an indirect immunofluorescence assay was developed for that specific purpose.⁴³⁹ Antibodies specific for the yeast phase must be removed from specimens under consideration before testing for the germ tube-specific antibodies. Quindos *et al.*^{440,441} used this assay in a retrospective study of various groups of patients and concluded that the test was able to discriminate between systemic candidiasis and other invasive mycoses. Its usefulness as a diagnostic aid for detection of systemic candidiasis remains to be determined in prospective studies including colonized patients, as well as those with superficial disease.

Finally, a novel assay has been described for the detection of antibodies to different antigens in a single assay, the usefulness of which is unknown at this stage, but it has potential for future development. McHugh *et al.*⁴⁴² coated polystyrene beads of varying diameters with three separate antigenic preparations of *C. albicans*, namely, a whole cell extract, a cytoplasmic extract and a cell wall polysaccharide, and tested patient sera in an assay that allowed for the separation of beads by flow cytometry. There are all sorts of possibilities for alterations in the protocol presented that could ultimately lead to a very specific assay for diagnosis of systemic candidiasis based on antibody responses to specific antigens.

It appears to be the consensus of those most heavily involved in serodiagnostic assay performance and development that antibody detected in any one of these assays, when evaluated in the context of the patient's clinical condition and other laboratory parameters, such as culture, can be helpful diagnostically and prognostically, but when evaluating only a single specimen, antibody data generated by these techniques are nearly impossible to interpret.

2.3.2. Antigen Detection

Early diagnosis of systemic candidiasis is necessary if effective therapy is to be instituted. It is clear that detection of antibody has not provided appropriate assays for early diagnosis of this clinical condition, and it was reasoned that detection of antigen might provide more rapid and definitive diagnostic data. Emphasis for antigen detection has been with two types of preparations, namely, antimannan antibody and antibody directed against a heat-labile antigen(s) that does not appear to be mannan. The first antigen targeted for detection was mannan, and hemagglutination inhibition,⁴⁴³

CIE,⁴⁴⁴ radioimmunoassay,⁴⁴⁵ ELISA-inhibition,^{409,446} and ELISA⁴⁴⁷ assays were developed for trials. In the original study,⁴⁴³ only 4 of 14 individuals with proven systemic candidiasis had demonstrable mannan antigenemia. Kerkering *et al.*⁴⁴⁴ had somewhat better results, in that eight out of 13 patients who eventually developed systemic candidiasis were positive. In yet another study, only five of 11 patients with systemic candidiasis had circulating mannan detectable by RIA.⁴⁴⁵

Since mannan can be present in sera in immune complexes, several investigators have suggested dissociative methods⁴⁴⁷ or heat extraction⁴⁴⁸ for increasing the likelihood of mannan detection. Although investigators do use these dissociative steps,^{449,450} it is not clear that the sensitivity of the test is greatly increased. Others^{450,451} have suggested that serial assays for mannan are important, perhaps because mannan has a relatively short half-life in serum⁴²² and is not released continuously from sites of infection.⁴⁵⁰ There is a single mannan-detection kit available commercially in the United States, the LA-*Candida* Antigen Detection System, Immuno-Mycologics, Inc., Norman, Oklahoma. That kit appears to be relatively insensitive in that none of the patients tested by Phillips *et al.*,⁴⁵² which included 33 patients with candidemia, none of those tested by Fung *et al.*,⁴⁵³ which included 9 patients with invasive candidiasis, and none tested by Bisbe *et al.*,⁴¹⁶ which included 36 heroin addicts diagnosed as having systemic candidiasis, were positive. Many of those same patients tested for a putatively different antigen (see below) were positive. Several groups^{449,454} have detected mannan by ELISA with considerably more success in terms of higher titers, but increasing the sensitivity decreased the specificity with regard to invasive candidiasis and its distinction from colonization. For example, Fujita *et al.*⁴⁵⁴ detected mannan in nine of 10 patients with systemic candidiasis, but it was also detected in two of four patients who had superficial candidiasis. Fujita *et al.*⁴⁵⁴ correlated their antigenemia studies with observations of antibody; antigenemia preceded rising antibody titers by 6 to 23 days.

A second antigen detection system, originally developed by Gentry *et al.*⁴⁵⁵ and now marketed as the CAND-TEC™ by Ramco Laboratories, Inc., Houston, Texas, has been evaluated rather extensively by several different laboratories.^{449,452,453,456–458} In one study,⁴⁵² only patients with candidemia were evaluated, along with patients at risk and healthy subjects, but in all others,^{449,453,456–458} patients with proven invasive candidiasis were included. Piens *et al.*,⁴⁵⁶ Ness *et al.*,⁴⁵⁷ and Escuro *et al.*⁴⁵⁸ determined the sensitivity to be 38%, 55%, and 76%, the specificity to be 90%, 29%, and 93%, the positive predictive value to be 50%, 17%, and 50%, and the negative predictive value to be 85%, 71%, and 100%, respectively.

The data available suggest that when using the CAND-TEC system, a titer of $\geq 1:4$ is equivocal and $\geq 1:8$ is evidence of disseminated disease.^{453,455} If that criterion was applied, sensitivity in the data reported by Piens *et al.*⁴⁵⁶ would fall to 0%, since none of their patients had titers $> 1:4$. In a comparative study of the CAND-TEC and ELISA assays, only four of 14 patients with

disseminated candidiasis were positive and 4/22 patients were positive by ELISA using 1:8 as the cutoff point. Others have suggested that rheumatoid factor⁴⁴⁹ and high creatinine levels⁴⁵⁷ interfere with the test, but Price and Gentry⁴⁵⁹ found no interference with the test in patients undergoing dialysis, and they⁴⁶⁰ determined in their survey that patients with rheumatoid factor and no antigen had titers of $\leq 1:2$. The latter investigators, as well as others,⁴⁵⁰ suggested also that the testing of sequential specimens would increase the likelihood of detecting antigen, but Escuro *et al.*,⁴⁵⁸ using weekly sampling, were not able to improve their detection rate. Pretreatment of serum with protease and heat improved results here as well.⁴⁶¹ One clinical condition where the CAND-TEC system would appear to be very valuable is in the diagnosis of pulmonary candidiasis,⁴⁶² a condition that, in general, is very difficult to diagnose. Fifteen of 16 patients with clinical and laboratory evidence of *C. albicans* pneumonia had positive CAND-TEC titers when bronchoalveolar lavage fluids were tested.

At least two additional antigen detection systems have been described but neither appears to have been tested in other laboratories, and their potential as candidate tests for general use is unknown.^{463,464} Moreover, Western blotting has been used recently to detect candiduria in patients with multiple positive blood cultures.⁴⁶⁵ The results of this one study suggest that detection of antigenuria may be useful diagnostically and prognostically, but more data are clearly needed to confirm the hypothesis.

2.3.3. Summary

It is obvious from the above discussion that the development of serodiagnostic tests for the diagnosis and prognosis of systemic candidiasis is a high priority in a number of laboratories. It is also obvious that no one test has yet been devised that is appropriately sensitive and specific for application to the routine clinical laboratory. For those laboratories equipped to do it, CIE or XIE appear the most reliable antibody assays, whereas an ELISA assay for mannan appears to be the most sensitive for antigen detection. As stated by Odds,¹⁷ however, “[Serodiagnosis] is one of the fastest developing aspects of candidal research. Those who devise novel serological approaches to diagnosis usually present their work in a positive fashion: those who apply them in clinical practice are usually more or less disappointed.”

2.3.4. Cell-Mediated Immunity (CMI)

2.3.4a. CMI in Humans. A high percentage of normal individuals, ranging from 54 to 94%, depending on the survey,⁴⁶⁶⁻⁴⁷⁰ have DH demonstrable by skin testing with *C. albicans* antigens. In one of the more extensive studies, Shannon *et al.*⁴⁶⁷ noted 80%, 89%, and 83% positive rates for children 7-12 months of age, 1-5 years of age, and 5-15 years of age, respectively, and 94%

in adults. Because of the high response rate in the general population, skin testing is of little value for the diagnosis or prognosis of systemic candidiasis, although skin test response and response rates in *in vitro* cell-mediated assays have been used to categorize patients with chronic mucocutaneous candidiasis.⁴⁷¹

Since there is such a high rate of responders in the population-at-large, a *C. albicans* extract is usually included in the battery of common recall antigens administered to patients in whom immunodeficiency is suspected. The antigen most frequently employed is a poorly defined *C. albicans* extract obtained from Hollister-Stier (Spokane, WA). Caution should be exercised in its use if applied repeatedly to the same patient, however, in that Hogan *et al.*⁴⁷⁰ have noted increased responsiveness after sequential skin test applications. It would be ideal to have available a reliable *in vitro* assay that could be employed to determine cellular immunity to *C. albicans*, and to that end, several groups of investigators have compared skin test results in normal patients with *in vitro* correlations of DH such as LS^{469,472} and migration inhibition assay.^{468,472} Close correlations were found between skin test reactivity and LS assays, but contradictory data were obtained using the migration inhibition assay.

The Hollister-Stier antigen has been used for LS *in vitro*,^{469,473} and other investigators have used other commercial antigens⁴⁷² or extracts prepared in the laboratory.⁴⁷⁴ Most of these extracts are poorly defined complex mixtures. The development of new antigenic preparations for *in vivo* or *in vitro* testing has moved quite slowly, in fact, although Esch and Buckley⁴⁷⁵ reported several years ago on a new type of extract they tested in humans. It was an ammonium sulfate fractionation of an aqueous extract of lyophilized *C. albicans* yeast. Fifty percent of a cohort of the normal population responded with reactions of ≥ 5 mm at 48h when tested with 1 μ g of the preparation.

2.3.3b. CMI in Experimental Models. Several different preparations, including heat-killed cells,^{476,477} cell wall extracts,^{379,478–482} and cytoplasmic components^{481,483} have been used in animal models in attempts to develop skin test antigens or correlate DH with other immune responses in animals. Evaluation of these antigens as potential candidates for human use has been complicated by the fact that, in a number of instances, the antigens were tested in animals immunized with nonviable extracts rather than infected with viable organisms.^{478–480,483} Further, skin test results with particulate antigens, as when heat-killed cells are employed, are difficult to interpret because of the possibility of B lymphocytes producing antibody *in situ*,⁴⁸⁴ and/or foreign body reactions resulting in complement activation, the latter of which could result in enhanced antigen retention and slowed antigen degradation. Moreover, in one human study,⁴⁸⁵ the injection of whole cells elicited a strong eosinophil response that persisted through 24h.

Cell wall and membrane components, as opposed to cytoplasmic preparations, appear to be the best antigens for *in vivo* testing described to date in

infected animals.^{379,479,481,482} Several types of cell wall preparations have been used, ranging from glycoproteins extracted with ethylenediamine (EDA)^{481,482} and cold dilute alkali,⁴⁷⁹ to mannans extracted by the Peat *et al.* method.^{379,383} Domer and Moser⁴⁸¹ compared many of these extracts, cell wall and cytoplasmic, the latter of which included both ribosomes and soluble cytoplasmic substances, in a murine model. A membrane extract and several cell wall preparations elicited the best responses. Many responses, however, were complicated by large 4h reactions. In subsequent studies, however, it was possible to demonstrate that if the cell wall glycoprotein extracted with EDA was subjected to extensive dialysis with 1 M NaCl to ensure removal of all ethylenediamine,³⁷⁹ it no longer elicited the large early responses. Moreover, testing of infected mice with mannan extracted by the Peat *et al.* method³⁸³ did not result in large early responses either, although such responses had been demonstrated in guinea pigs.⁴⁸⁰ The lack of early response in infected mice may reflect the fact that mice respond poorly to mannan with respect to antibody production.⁴⁸⁶ The response to the EDA-extracted glycoprotein was destroyed by treatment with proteolytic enzymes and partially ablated by periodate oxidation of the preparation.⁴⁸¹ Moreover, the *in vivo* responses to that glycoprotein, as well as to a membrane preparation extracted with hot phosphate-buffered saline, could be transferred with T lymphocytes.^{481,482}

Many of the preparations used for *in vivo* testing have been tested for their applicability in *in vitro* tests, especially for LS assays. Moser *et al.*,⁴⁸² for example, compared EDA-extracted cell wall glycoprotein, a soluble membrane extract, and soluble cytoplasmic substances, for their ability to stimulate lymphocytes from infection mice. Responses to the cell wall and membrane extracts correlated well with DH responses *in vivo*, but surprisingly, the cytoplasmic preparation, a preparation which was poorly reactive *in vivo*, induced strong proliferative responses *in vitro*. These studies confirmed an earlier study with human cells in which cytoplasmic and cell wall antigens were compared, in that the EDA-extracted material elicited the best proliferative responses.⁴⁷⁴ Although the EDA-extracted glycoprotein induced lymphocytes to proliferate *in vitro*,^{482,487} as did a phosphorylated mannoprotein complex from the cell wall of *C. albicans*⁴⁸⁸ and an ethanol-precipitated and deproteinized extract,⁴⁸⁹ mannan did so poorly, if at all, with human^{488,490,491} or murine lymphocytes.⁴⁸⁷ Tollemer *et al.*⁴⁹¹ noted a much better response in peripheral blood lymphocytes to cytoplasmic antigens, as did Gettner and Mackenzie.⁴⁹⁰ The conflict between the *in vivo* and *in vitro* data with mannan, may relate to the extraction procedure. Most investigators have used the method of Peat *et al.*³⁸³ Podzorski *et al.*³⁶⁹ tested a mannan extracted with cetyltrimethylammonium bromide and found it to be a potent stimulator of *in vitro* lymphoproliferation for human lymphocytes. Small oligosaccharides derived from that mannan were not stimulatory, however. Perhaps smaller molecular weight components in the Peat *et al.*³⁸³ extract act to depress the response *in vitro* but not *in vivo*.

2.3.4c. Summary. It is clear from many studies that a high percentage of humans develop cellular immunity demonstrable *in vivo* by skin testing and *in vitro* by testing for proliferation of lymphocytes when testing is done with a number of different antigenic mixtures. It is also quite clear that detection of cellular immune responses is hampered by a lack of standardization in methodology and in the antigenic preparations employed. The preparations available commercially are poorly defined complex mixtures, and those developed in the laboratory and tested under experimental conditions have not yet been tested in prospective studies with normal subjects and human patients with various forms of candidiasis. It is difficult, in fact, based on the experimental work, to make generalizations as to which of the many preparations tested should be targeted for development for *in vivo* or *in vitro* testing, although it would appear that mannan should not be considered. Other cell wall antigens appear more promising, but since many normal individuals have circulating antibody to cell wall antigens, large, immediate hypersensitivity reactions might be expected with cell wall antigens.

2.4. Therapy of Systemic Candidiasis

The treatment of systemic candidiasis generally consists of measures directed against the underlying condition(s) (e.g., neutropenia or leukemia) and administration of an antifungal agent. Because difficulties are often encountered in establishing the diagnosis and because the infection often occurs in complex clinical settings, clinicians must be guided by the “art” of medicine, as well as its “literature,” in deciding when to initiate antifungal treatment, what to use, and how long to continue the therapy.

Amphotericin B, a polyene antibiotic produced by *Streptomyces nodosus*, is the current mainstay of therapy. Amphotericin B interacts with fungal plasma membrane sterols and renders the membrane leaky.⁴⁹² Resistant *Candida* spp. organisms are uncommon but have been described. Because amphotericin B is insoluble, the intravenous form of this drug is prepared as a complex with deoxycholate. The intravenous administration of amphotericin B-deoxycholate is associated with considerable host toxicity and regularly causes fever, chills, impaired renal function, and anemia. Bennett⁴⁹³ has provided excellent guidelines for its clinical use. Considerable interest attends the development of alternative, less toxic liposomal formulations of amphotericin B, some of which are in current clinical trials.

When used in combination with amphotericin B, 5-fluorocytosine may have utility in treating candidal meningitis.⁴⁹⁴ This agent is converted by deamination and phosphorylation to 5-fluorodeoxyuridylic acid, a competitive inhibitor of thymidylate synthetase,⁴⁹⁵ and is also incorporated extensively into fungal RNA.⁴⁹⁶ Primary resistance of *C. albicans* to the agent is not uncommon.⁴⁹⁶

Imidazoles (e.g. ketoconazole) and the closely related triazoles (e.g.,

fluconazole) inhibit fungal ergosterol production by inhibiting cytochrome P₄₅₀-dependent 14- α -demethylase.⁴⁹⁷ The drugs are effective after oral administration and are generally much less toxic than amphotericin B-deoxycholate complex. Fluconazole attains excellent penetration into the cerebrospinal fluid.⁴⁹⁸ Although it has given promising results in the treatment of oropharyngeal candidiasis in patients with cancer⁴⁹⁹ and AIDS,⁵⁰⁰ its efficacy in systemic candidiasis is unproven. Perhaps, as with the earlier imidazole drug ketoconazole,⁵⁰¹⁻⁵⁰⁴ its primary utility will be in chemoprophylaxis.

For those seeking a broader description of the clinical syndromes of systemic candidiasis and their treatments, the excellent recent reviews by Edwards⁵⁰⁴ and Meunier⁵⁰⁵ are highly recommended.

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