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CONCLUSIONS

Test group A is indistinguishable from the normal population with respect to serum immunoglobulins IgG, IgA, IgM, IgD and IgE, and with respect to peripheral blood lymphocytes and their mitogen transformation.

Test group C shows a significant increase in the proportion of cases with reduced levels of IgD and IgM. This group shows an increased proportion of cases with depressed PHA reactivity.

Test group B falls intermediate between groups A and C with increased proportion of cases with IgD levels only, IgM levels and PHA reactivity being normal.

IgE is the antibody class associated with the initiation of the immune response and with immune response to viral and particulate antigens. IgD is thought to be associated with the transfer of immune capability from the T-cell to the B-cell and with short term immunological memory.

These results would seem to suggest that Test group C is relatively deficient in primary immune capability and in T-cell - B cell co-operation. The reduced PHA transformation response in this group is likely to be the result of viral induced T-cell depression as a secondary feature of the reduced humoral immune capability rather than a primary T-cell defect.

This would further suggest that toxic exposure to TCDD induces a lasting affect on B-cell memory and immune capability, the intermediate position of test group B being consistent with previous exposure to TCDD but at nontoxic levels.

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