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JOURNAL ARTICLE

Seminal alpha-glucosidase activity as a marker of epididymal pathology in nonazoospermic men consulting for infertility

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Glucosidase (alpha G) activity was measured in sperm free seminal plasma from 1200 patients consulting for primary infertility, in whom clinical examination of epididymides revealed some abnormalities and histories of genital infections. They constituted the group with epididymal pathology (P) that was compared with a reference group (R) of 246 men without any epididymal pathology. The distribution of alpha G was significantly different between the two groups, even if we considered only the subjects in group P with normal sperm count (PN: 353 men: p less than 10(-6). 15.9% of subjects in group PN exhibited alpha G values as low as vasectomized men, versus 1.2% in group R. A linear relationship was established between alpha G and sperm content in both groups, but alpha G activities were systematically lower in group P (y = 0.19 x + 64) than in group R (y = 0.30 x + 86). There was no correlation between alpha G and the percent of sperm motility. On the contrary, we found statistically more clinical epididymal abnormalities in cases of decreased alpha G activity than in cases of normal alpha G activity (p less than .01).

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