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Elevated Seminal pH and Ureaplasma Urealyticum

JOHN R. VALVO¹, ANTHONY A. CALDAMONE¹, SALLY HIPPI², DAVID DUNCAN¹, AND ABRAHAM T. K. COCKETT¹

¹ *Division of Urology, University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry, Rochester, New York*

² *Division of Laboratories and Research, Department of Health, State of New York, Albany, New York*

Normal semen has up to three polymorphonuclear leukocytes per high power field (HPF). Reduced zinc concentrations (<15 mg/dl), elevated pH (>7.7), and neutrophils (5-10 leukocytes/HPF) in semen can suggest the presence of an asymptomatic infection. Reduced zinc levels, pyosemia and elevated pH suggest prostatic secretory dysfunction. Fifty-seven patients with at least two of the above alterations underwent special urine and semen cultures in an attempt to isolate Ureaplasma (U.) urealyticum. Twenty-seven of the 57 semen cultures were positive for U. urealyticum. Patients with pyosemia, reduced seminal zinc, and elevated pH should be treated with antibiotics (usually minocycline) for a minimum of four weeks. Subsequent semen analysis should be monitored to gauge efficacy of treatment. We emphasize a clinical therapeutic approach based on the above parameters, in the absence of other demonstrable causes of infertility.

Key words: Ureaplasma urealyticum, elevated seminal pH, pyosemia, minocycline

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