

PLASMA CORTISOL LEVELS IN VITILIGO (A short communication)

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Several studies published lately indicate that corticoids can promote repigmentation of vitiligo patches^{1,2}. Development of pigmentation has also been observed after injections of ACTH³.

The repigmentation could be the result of increase in quantity of circulating cortisol due to stimulation of the adrenal cortex by ACTH or due to the therapeutic supplementation of cortisol. Therefore a study of plasma cortisol levels was planned in patients with vitiligo.

Material and Method

Blood samples from 129 voluntary male blood donors and 24 male vitiligo patients were studied. Age of the volunteers varied from 20 to 40 yrs and of vitiligo patients from 8 to 51 yrs. All the blood samples were collected between 10 and 11 a.m. The plasma cortisol values were determined by Flourimetric method of Mattingly⁴.

Results

See table : Cortisol levels ranged from 4.2 to 13.90 ug% in normal and 4.2 to 12.75 ug% in vitiligo patients.

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On application of the statistical test of significance for the differences between the averages of plasma cortisol levels of male controls and male vitiligo patients it was seen that the difference was significant at 5% level.

Remarks

Cortisol is a unique steroid secreted by adrenal cortex. It has widespread effects on the body. Decreased values are characteristically seen in adrenocortical insufficiency of primary or secondary type.

TABLE

	Male Controls	Vitiligo Males
Number of individuals	129	24
Average plasma cortisol levels (\bar{x})	8.66	7.37
Standard deviation	1.81	2.55
Percentage of the individuals above \bar{x}	53	42
Percentage of the individuals below \bar{x}	47	58

REFERENCES

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3. Gokhale BB and Gokhale TB: Corticotrophin and Vitiligo, *Brit J Derm*, 95 : 329, 1976.
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Note the white forelock, lateral displacement of the inner canthi and the inferior lacrimal puncti touching the cornea, high broad nasal root, confluence of the medial eyebrows and bilateral isohypochromia irides.

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