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Original Article

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Increased Levels of Soluble Adhesion Molecules in Type 2 (Non-Insulin Dependent) Diabetes mellitus Are Independent of Glycaemic Control

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Abstract

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Summary

Patients with Type 2 (non-insulin dependent) diabetes mellitus are at increased risk of thrombosis and the premature development of

atherosclerosis. This may be related to damage to the endothelium (which may be the primary target tissue for the disease process) resulting from a loss of normal glycaemic metabolic control. Thus changes in endothelial cell function, such as modified release of soluble leukocyte and platelet adhesion molecules, may be important.

Accordingly, E-selectin, von Willebrand factor (vWf), vascular cell adhesion molecule (VCAM) and intercellular adhesion molecule (ICAM) were measured in serum from 60 patients and 76 controls. Raised levels of vWf ($p = 0.0002$), E-selectin ($p < 0.0001$) and VCAM ($p = 0.003$) in patient's samples failed to correlate with glycaemic control as assessed by levels of fructosamine and glycated haemoglobin, or with 24 h urine albumin. Levels of ICAM were not increased in our patients.

Levels of the two endothelial cell products, vWf and E-selectin, failed to correlate although E-selectin correlated with low density lipoprotein cholesterol ($p = 0.016$). vWf correlated with VCAM ($p < 0.001$) and hypertension ($p = 0.032$). We conclude that levels of soluble adhesion molecules vWf, E-selectin and VCAM are raised in Type 2 diabetes mellitus. The mechanisms for these changes appear to be independent of glycaemic control but may relate to concurrent hypertension and/or hypercholesterolaemia.



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