

Letter to the editors

Dr. M. Kasper

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Sirs:

In Virchows Archiv A Pathol Anat (1991) 418:119–127 the article by H.P. Dinges et al. at “Coexpression of cytokeratin and vimentin filaments in rete testis and epididymis. An immunohistochemical study” was published. We reported similar findings in Cell Tissue Research (1989) 257:661–664 under the heading “Immunohistochemical investigation of different cytokeratins and vimentin in the human epididymis from the fetal period up to adulthood”. In our opinion, many of the fundamental statements made by Dinges et al. had previously been published in our article uncited. The studies of Wernert et al. “Immunohistochemical investigation of different cytokeratins and vimentin in the prostate from the fetal period up to adulthood and in prostate carcinoma” published in Path Res Pract (1987) 182:617–622 and by Viebahn et al. “The mesonephric (wolffian) and paramesonephric (mullerian) ducts of golden hamsters express different intermediate-filament proteins during development” published in Differentiation (1987) 34:175–188 were not quoted. We would like to ask Dinges et al. for their comments.

References

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Reply

**Co-expression of cytokeratin and vimentin filaments
in rete testis and epididymis.
An immunohistochemical study**

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Sirs:

The paper of M. Kasper and P. Stosiek (1989) dealing with the coexpression of intermediate filaments in the human epididymis has been published in the second half of 1989, about half a year before our paper (Dinges et al. 1991) dealing in part with the same topic has been sent to the editor of Virchows Archiv in May 1990. Because of some delay of our paper in the final adaption and correction phase, the paper of Kasper and Stosiek has not been considered by us. I apologize for this omission. Nevertheless, some differences between our paper and the paper by Kasper and Stosiek should be emphasized:

1. The statements made by Kasper and Stosiek are limited to the epididymis and – in my opinion – are poorly documented. Although the most important results and conclusions, e.g. the coexpression of cytokeratin (CK) and vimentin (Vim) in a single epididymal cell, are drawn by means of immunofluorescence microscopy, no quantitative documentation of the immunofluorescence investigations is shown.
2. The coexpression of CK and Vim in the epididymis is postulated but not documented (citation: “not shown”). In one case only was the detection of CK 17 and Vim in *different* cell types displayed.
3. Statements about the behaviour of the intermediate filaments in the fetal epididymis are also not documented by figures and the situation in the prepubertal epididymis is shown by one figure displaying only Vim expression.

4. The different distribution pattern of CK and Vim in the epididymis is also poorly documented both in regard to the behaviour in a single cell and also due to its general topographical distribution.

In the paper by Dinges et al. (1991) all these findings (1–4) are well documented by figures including single and double immunofluorescence on cryocut sections and single and double immunohistochemistry on paraffin sections. In particular, the coexpression of CK and Vim in a single cell and the topographical distribution pattern of these intermediate filaments in general is shown by figures.

In his letter to the editor Dr. Kasper also criticized the absence of *important* citations concerning the coexpression of CK and Vim in the genital tract. In this context the cited two papers (Wernert et al. 1987, Vieban et al. 1987). The paper of Wernert et al. deals with the coexpression of CK and Vim in the prostate. The publication by Vieban et al. analyses the double expression of CK and Vim in the epithelium of the Wolffian and Mullerian ducts in golden hamsters. The publication of Wernert et al. does not involve in any way the particular topic of coexpression of CK and Vim in testis and epididymis, but because of comment on the phylogenesis of the male genital tract the report of Vieban et al. might have been discussed by us. Nevertheless, there is no direct parallel in adult human testis and epididymis.

Because of the controversial findings concerning the expression of CK and Vim in rete testis and epididymis which has been reported by other authors (Achtstätter et al. 1985, Ramaekers et al. 1985) precise documentation and figural presentation of all essential findings is

– at least in my opinion – the prerequisite for solving the open problems.

I apologize for the non-citation of the paper by Kasper and Stosiek. But I do not believe that the value of our paper with well documented statements and conclusions, published in *Virchows Archiv*, has lost any importance.

References

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