3. Plasma Exchange Therapy in the Treatment of Rheumatoid Arthritis

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In these years, plasma exchange (PE) has been paid attention as a therapy for diseases revealing various immunological disorders.

Since 1978, we have performed PE against collagen disease and autoimmune disease mainly rheumatoid arthritis (RA) and reported its results so far.

This time, we carried out the following four methods against RA and studied about its usefulness.
1. Membrane filtration plasma exchange (MFPE)
2. Double filtration plasma exchange (DFPE)
3. Immunoabsorbent (IA)
4. Lymphocytopheresis (LCP)

We employed Azathioprine for a combination therapy in either method of the above.

We established a definite criterion for the judgement of efficacy and based on it.

We could obtain the same result by MFPE and DFPE with that of plasma exchange which reported previously.

The decrease of immune complex and some variations of immunological parameter were noted by IA and ICP, respectively.

We studied about clinical symptoms, autoantibody, progress of immune complex, etc., and clinical effectiveness concerning each method.

4. Analysis and Clinical Significance of Cryogel Obtained from Patients with Rheumatoid Arthritis

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MATERIAL AND METHODS

1. CF system: CF system was performed according to the already established method. AP-05H (Asahi Med. Co.) and PS 4000 (Terumo Japan Co.) were used as the first filter. AP-06 and CF 01 were used as the second filter. When the pressure in the second filter rose to around 250 mmHg, CF was finished.

2. Patients: CF was performed a total of 196 on fourteen patients with RA. Four were men and ten were women between the ages of 37–70 years.