

## Letter to the Editor

# Early-onset Thrombocytopenia in the Chemotherapy of Testicular Teratoma

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WE READ with interest the demonstration of a reduced platelet survival following chemotherapy with vinblastine, bleomycin and *cis*-platinum for testicular teratoma [1].

We have occasionally observed the same occurrence and other authors have documented it [2, 3]. This early-onset transient thrombocytopenia should be exactly recognized, since otherwise chemotherapy may be prematurely and unduly terminated.

Recently we were able to follow daily the platelet count in 8 patients receiving combination chemotherapy for advanced testicular teratoma. Three patients were treated according to our previous protocol, which started with 2 courses of vinblastine/bleomycin followed later on by 2 cycles with adriamycin/*cis*-platinum [4]. The last 5 patients were treated according to our current protocol as follows: vinblastine 5.25 mg/m<sup>2</sup> on days 1 and 2, bleomycin 20 mg/m<sup>2</sup> daily in continuous infusion on days 1-4 and *cis*-

platinum 120 mg/m<sup>2</sup> on day 5. In all 8 patients there was a decrease in the platelet count of >50% with a median nadir of  $40 \times 10^4/\text{mm}^3$  (range  $2-10 \times 10^4/\text{mm}^3$ ). The nadir occurred in 1 case by day 3, in 5 cases by day 4 and in 2 cases by day 5 (prior to the administration of *cis*-platinum). In the 5 patients receiving *cis*-platinum on day 5 there was nevertheless a rapid recovery of the platelet count after cessation of the bleomycin infusion, which was generally completed only a few hours before the injection of *cis*-platinum.

The authors of the report published in your journal conclude that this early-onset transient thrombocytopenia may be attributable to a synergistic effect of the 3 drugs [1]. However, in view of the combinations used on our patients we are able to eliminate *cis*-platinum as a component of this synergistic action. We believe, therefore, that the synergistic mechanism which leads to this early-onset transient thrombocytopenia is limited to vinblastine and bleomycin.

## REFERENCES

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