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Nasal cytology in patients with previous SARS-CoV-2 infection: occurrence of atypical lymphocytes

SARS-CoV-2 is a new pandemic infection that affects at the beginning the upper respiratory system, and, successively, all the organisms, due to cytokine storm, with serious consequences that can reach death. The aim of this work was the observation of the nasal mucosa of enrolled 60 patients, resulting negative for two weeks to the molecular swab for SARS-CoV-2, versus the control group. Rhino-fibroscopy and nasal cytology of nasal mucosa were performed for both the investigated groups. The observation of the samples showed the occurrence of plasmablastic lymphocytes and Downey II lymphocytes type. The former type of lymphocytes was prevalent against the second one, probably because of an immunological “scar”. The rhino-fibroscopy showed a “pseudo ischemia of nasal submucosa” at pre and pericranial levels, not occurred in the control group.
The occurrence of atypical lymphocytes in the nasal smear was analog to that observed in the blood peripheral smear, probably caused by mechanisms of local immune reaction and dysregulation like those observed in other virus infections. Our findings suggest that the nasal mucosa study through the nasal cytology, can represent an important predictive tool of the SARS-CoV-2 infection.