



**University of Dundee**

## **The diversity of neutrophil inclusion bodies in fulminant sepsis**

Boyd, Karen; Tauro, Sudhir

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## The diversity of neutrophil inclusion bodies in fulminant sepsis

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Review

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3 **The diversity of neutrophil inclusion bodies in fulminant sepsis**

4 Karen Boyd<sup>1</sup>, Sudhir Tauro<sup>1,2</sup>

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8 <sup>1</sup>Department of Haematology and <sup>2</sup>Dundee Cancer Centre, Ninewells Hospital and  
9 Medical School, Dundee DD1 9SY, Scotland, United Kingdom  
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14 **Corresponding Author**

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16  
17 Dr Sudhir Tauro  
18 Dundee Cancer Centre  
19 Ninewells Hospital & Medical School  
20 University of Dundee  
21 Dundee DD1 9SY  
22 United Kingdom  
23 Tel: 44(0)1382 740403  
24 Fax: 44(0)1382 632492  
25 Email: s.tauro@dundee.ac.uk  
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3 A 70-year-old man with a normal blood count underwent laparoscopic sigmoid  
4 colectomy for localised adenocarcinoma. He had no significant past medical history  
5 and was HIV negative. Due to a post-operative anastomotic leak, emergency  
6 laparotomy and end-colostomy were performed, but he developed septic shock and  
7 required admission to the intensive care unit. *Escherichia coli* was subsequently  
8 identified in blood cultures. A full blood count showed: Hb 92 g/l, white cells  $16.5 \times$   
9  $10^9/l$ , platelets  $64 \times 10^9/l$  and neutrophils  $15.5 \times 10^9/l$ . Levels of serum procalcitonin  
10 (2022.42 ng/ml), C-reactive protein (580 mg/l, normal range (NR) 0–10) and lactate  
11 (6.8 mmol/l, NR 0.7–1.8) highlighted the severity of infection. Review of the blood  
12 film showed inclusions within neutrophils including Döhle Bodies (top left) and  
13 Howell-Jolly-like bodies (top middle and right). Other nuclear changes resembling  
14 Barr bodies (bottom left) and less dense fragments associating with, or following  
15 separation from, nuclear segments were also visible (bottom right). These features  
16 resolved as he improved.  
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20 The presence of Döhle bodies (consisting of ribosomes and endoplasmic reticulum)  
21 within neutrophils during inflammation and infection is well recognised. In contrast,  
22 Howell–Jolly-like bodies, representing non-apoptotic nuclear fragments of neutrophils  
23 have been described only in the occasional patient receiving immunosuppressive  
24 therapy or granulocyte colony-stimulating factor (G-CSF) or with HIV infection.  
25 These intracytoplasmic bodies can mimic infection-related inclusions due to  
26 anaplasmosis or ehrlichiosis, but our patient was not at risk of tick-borne diseases  
27 and improved despite no therapy for rickettsial disease. The concomitant presence  
28 of Howell–Jolly-like bodies and Döhle bodies (similar to that observed with  
29 therapeutic G-CSF) seen here may reflect developmental changes in neutrophils due  
30 to high levels of endogenous G-CSF in severe sepsis.  
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**Declarations**

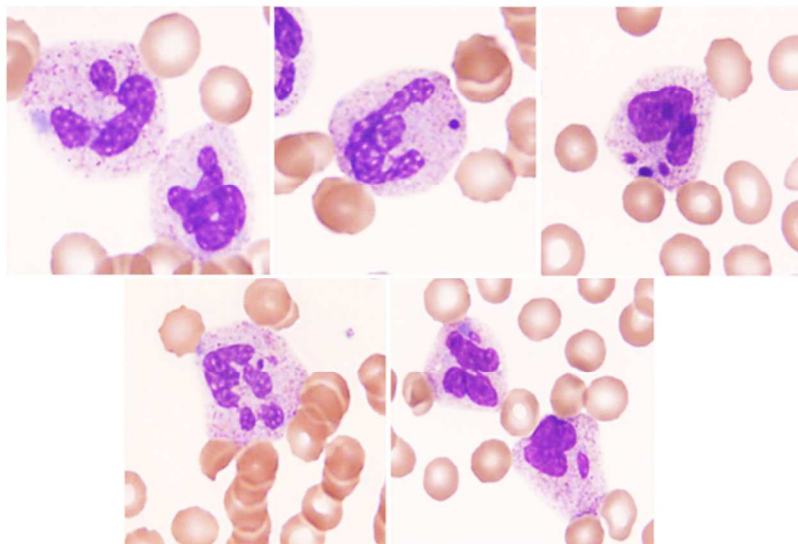
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ST and KB identified the abnormalities in blood film and researched the significance of these. ST wrote the paper.

For Peer Review

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