

the HEMORRHAGIC DISORDERS

A Clinical and Therapeutic Approach

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Introduction

THE need for another book on the hemorrhagic disorders might legitimately be questioned, since a number of excellent treatises are presently available. Our thought in writing the present volume, however, is that the needs of the practicing physician in his quest for useful information in this field have not yet been fully met. We have been particularly impressed with the great and possibly undue emphasis placed upon disorders of the coagulation mechanism, at times to the exclusion of other disturbances of the hemostatic mechanism. To be sure, the abnormalities of coagulation are of importance, and fascinating to boot. Nevertheless, they may be said to represent only one leg of a four-legged stool, of which the other "legs" are the vascular, the platelet and the fibrinolytic mechanisms. Thus, we have tried to utilize as broad an approach as possible, especially since a single defect as the sole cause of a given hemorrhagic disorder is unusual.

Essentially, this aims to be a practical book, based on the actual study of a very large number of cases of hemorrhagic disturbance. Our approach to these cases has been that of the clinician and the clinical investigator, with the laboratory studies representing only one phase of the management of the patient as a whole. Thus, details of therapy have been stressed throughout, a matter of particular importance to the practicing physician. In addition, a large number of didactic tables, diagrams and illustrations have been included, because we have learned to appreciate their value in teaching both the young medical student and his older counterpart, the graduate physician. They are, furthermore, instrumental in saving considerable space in the text.

In recent years a number of "new" entities have come to the fore, and it is of these, rather than of the better known disturbances such as hemophilia, that detailed descriptions have been made. Thus, the fibrinolytic purpuras, the hemorrhagic disturbances of pregnancy and the puerperium, the "dysproteinemic" purpuras, and the vascular purpuras are given the consideration which their relative novelty on the medical scene seems to require. One chapter is devoted to special therapeutic procedures useful in hemorrhagic disease, and an appendix presents a series of "screening tests" and other diagnostic procedures which will serve in the evaluation of most hemorrhagic disturbances.

We are indebted to many individuals for their help and cooperation in the preparation of this monograph. Many of the illustrations have been reproduced through the courtesy of various authors and publishers. We wish to thank particularly Dr. R. G. MacFarlane (Oxford, England), Drs. Jóhann Saemudsson and Ólafur Bjarnason (Reykjarik, Iceland), Dr. Jan

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Particularly in this period, when the cost of investigation has reached peak levels, we are highly appreciative of the continued support to our research by the United States Public Health Service, National Institutes of Health; the Atomic Energy Commission; the American Heart Association; and the American Cancer Society. One of us (M. S.) was also supported by a Senior Research Fellowship of the National Institute of Health (1946-1949) and the Damon Runyon Foundation (1949-1952); and by an Established Investigatorship of the American Heart Association.

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Alphabetic List of Commonly Used Terms for Blood Coagulation
Factors and the Denominations Used in This Text

Factor	Abbreviation	Definition in this monograph
Accelerin		Serum accelerator
Antihemophilic globulin ¹	AHG	Antihemophilic globulin
Antihemophilic globulin B	AHG-B	Plasma thromboplastin component ⁴
Christmas factor		Plasma thromboplastin component ⁴
Co-factor of thromboplastin		Labile factor ²
Convertin (<i>see</i> Proconvertin)		
Co-thromboplastin		Stable factor ⁸
Factor V		Labile factor ²
Factor VII		Stable factor ⁸
Factor VIII		Antihemophilic globulin ¹
Factor IX		Plasma thromboplastin component ⁴
Labile factor ²	LF	Labile factor
Plasma Ac-globulin		Labile factor ²
Plasma prothrombin conversion factor	PPCF	Labile factor ²
Plasma thromboplastin antecedent ³	PTA	Same
Plasma thromboplastin component ⁴	PTC	Same
Plasma thromboplastic factor A	PTF-A	Antihemophilic globulin ¹
Plasma thromboplastic factor B	PTF-B	Plasma thromboplastin component ⁴
Plasma thromboplastic factor C	PTF-C	Plasma thromboplastin antecedent ³
Platelet activator		Platelet thromboplastic factor ⁵
Platelet thromboplastic factor ⁵	PTF	Same

Alphabetic List—*Continued*

Factor	Abbreviation	Definition in this monograph
Precursor → serum prothrombin conversion accelerator	SPCA	Stable factor ⁸
Proaccelerin		Labile factor ²
Proconvertin → convertin		Stable factor ⁸
Prothrombinase		Prothrombin converting complex ⁶
Prothrombin converting complex ⁶		Prothrombin converting complex
Serum accelerator ⁷		Serum accelerator
Serum Ac-globulin		Serum accelerator ⁷
Serum prothrombin conversion accelerator	SPCA	<i>see</i> Precursor → serum prothrombin conversion accelerator
Stable factor ⁸	SF	Stable factor
Thromboplastinogen		Antihemophilic globulin ¹
Thromboplastinogenase		Platelet thromboplastic factor ⁵

¹ Reacts with the platelet thromboplastic factor, plasma thromboplastin component, plasma thromboplastin antecedent and, possibly, other plasma factors to form plasma thromboplastin (see figure 11).

² Reacts with a complex of thromboplastin, stable factor and calcium to form the prothrombin converting complex (or prothrombinase). This, in turn, converts prothrombin to thrombin (see figure 12).

³ Reacts with the platelet thromboplastic factor, antihemophilic globulin, plasma thromboplastin component and probably other plasma factors to form plasma thromboplastin (see figure 11).

⁴ Reacts with the platelet thromboplastic factor, antihemophilic globulin, plasma thromboplastin antecedent and probably other plasma factors to form plasma thromboplastin (see figure 11).

⁵ Reacts with several plasma factors (antihemophilic globulin, plasma thromboplastin component, plasma thromboplastin antecedent, possibly others) to form plasma thromboplastin (see figure 11).

⁶ Formed by the interaction of thromboplastin, stable factor, calcium and labile factor. Converts prothrombin to thrombin, likely in the presence of calcium (see figure 12).

⁷ Derived from the labile factor through the action of thrombin. In its presence, the formation of the prothrombin converting factor is accelerated (see figure 14).

⁸ Reacts with thromboplastin and calcium to form a preliminary complex, which then reacts with the labile factor to form the prothrombin converting complex (see figure 12).

Contents

INTRODUCTION.....	xi
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I. The Normal Hemostatic Process, 1

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS.....	1
THE VASCULAR MECHANISM.....	4
THE PLATELET.....	12
THE BLOOD COAGULATION MECHANISM.....	16
Clotting Factors.....	16
Theories of the Blood Coagulation Process.....	19
Sequence of Events in the Blood Coagulation Process.....	29
"Autocatalytic" Mechanisms.....	30
Inhibitor and Anticoagulant Mechanisms.....	35
A Current Working Hypothesis.....	37
THE FIBRINOLYTIC MECHANISM.....	37
THE ROLE OF CALCIUM IN THE HEMOSTATIC MECHANISM.....	40
THE RETRACTION OF THE CLOT.....	41

II. Classification of Hemorrhagic Diseases, 44

III. Hemorrhagic Diseases due to Defects of the Vascular Factor of Hemostasis, 48

CONGENITAL ABNORMALITIES OF THE VASCULAR WALL.....	49
Hereditary Hemorrhagic Telangiectasia.....	49
Telangiectasia and Spiders.....	54
Pseudohemophilia (Vascular).....	56
Idiopathic Vascular Abnormalities.....	59
Pulmonary hemosiderosis.....	60
Idiopathic hematemesis and melena.....	62
Ehlers-Danlos syndrome.....	62
INCREASED VASCULAR PERMEABILITY.....	65
Scurvy.....	65
INCREASED VASCULAR FRAGILITY.....	69
Purpura Simplex.....	69
Hereditary Familial Purpura Simplex.....	69
Simple Easy Bruising.....	69
Senile and Cachectic Purpura.....	69
Purpura Factitia.....	71
Psychogenic Purpura.....	71

Mechanical Purpura.....	71
Orthostatic Purpura.....	72
Purpura of Infectious Diseases.....	72
Purpura Fulminans.....	72
Purpura of Diabetes, Uremia, Hypertension, etc.....	73
Purpura due to Excess of Circulating Histamine.....	73
Vascular Purpura due to Drugs.....	73
ACUTE AND CHRONIC VASCULAR (ANAPHYLACTOID) PURPURA.....	74
Purpura.....	74
Joint Symptoms.....	74
Gastrointestinal Symptoms.....	75
Renal Symptoms.....	75
Other Disturbances.....	76
IDIOPATHIC "PIGMENTED" PURPURIC ERUPTION.....	81
GENERAL CONCEPTS IN THE TREATMENT OF VASCULAR PURPURA..	85

IV. The Thrombocytopenic States, 88

"IDIOPATHIC" THROMBOCYTOPENIC PURPURA (ITP).....	88
Acute ITP.....	89
Onyalai.....	93
Chronic ITP.....	93
VARIETIES OF ITP (USUALLY ACUTE).....	101
Combined ITP and Autoimmune Hemolytic Anemia of the Acquired Variety (Evans-Fisher Syndrome).....	102
Thrombohemolytic Thrombocytopenic Purpura (Thrombotic Thrombocytopenic Purpura).....	102
HYPERSPLENIC PURPURA.....	105
CONGENITAL AND NEONATAL THROMBOCYTOPENIAS.....	106
THROMBOCYTOPENIC PURPURA INDUCED BY DRUGS.....	110
THROMBOCYTOPENIA FROM EXCESSIVE BLEEDING.....	116
THROMBOCYTOPENIA ASSOCIATED WITH HEMANGIOMA.....	117
QUALITATIVE PLATELET DEFICIENCIES (THROMBOCYTOASTHENIAS).....	117
THE TREATMENT OF THROMBOCYTOPENIC STATES.....	120
ACTH and Cortisone.....	121
Platelet Transfusions.....	127
Splenectomy.....	137

V. Diseases due to Deficiency of Factors Participating in the Blood Coagulation Mechanism, 143

DISEASES DUE TO DEFICIENCIES OF PLASMA THROMBOPLASTIN PRECURSORS (HYPOTHROMBOPLASTINEMIAS).....	144
---	-----

Hemophilia	144
Symptoms and laboratory findings	148
Treatment	154
Acquired "Antihemophilic Globulin Deficiency"	161
Hemophilia-like States	161
PTC deficiency	164
PTA deficiency	165
Others	166
Classification of the Hemophilic Syndromes	167
DISEASES DUE TO DEFICIENT CONVERSION OF PROTHROMBIN TO THROMBIN	168
Hypoprothrombinemia	170
Congenital	170
Acquired	171
Labile Factor Deficiency	175
Congenital	175
Acquired	175
Stable Factor Deficiency	178
Congenital	178
Acquired	178
Therapeutic Use of Vitamin K in the Hypoprothrombinemic States	182
DISEASES DUE TO DEFICIENT FORMATION OF FIBRIN	188
Congenital Afibrinogenemia and Fibrinogenopenia	188
Acquired Fibrinogenopenia	190
VI. Hemorrhagic Diseases of Complex Etiology, with Involvement of Multiple Hemostatic Mechanisms, 192	
LEUKEMIA	192
POLYCYTHEMIC STATES	193
IDIOPATHIC THROMBOCYTHEMIA AND RELATED SYNDROMES	196
PARENCHYMAL LIVER DISEASE AND BILIARY OBSTRUCTION	200
COMPLEX HEMOSTATIC DEFECT INDUCED BY THE ADMINISTRATION OF GLUCOSE POLYMERS	202
THE BLEEDING TENDENCY OF EPIDEMIC HEMORRHAGIC FEVER	203
VII. Hemorrhagic Diseases due to Circulating Anticoagulants, 205	
CLASSIFICATION AND OCCURRENCE	205
CLINICAL PICTURE	209
LABORATORY FINDINGS	210

MANAGEMENT.....	212
Plasma Antithrombin Titer in Pancreatic Diseases.....	213

VIII. Bleeding Tendency due to Fibrinolysis ("Fibrinolytic Purpura"), 214

CLASSIFICATION AND OCCURRENCE.....	214
SYMPTOMS AND LABORATORY FINDINGS.....	217
TREATMENT.....	220

IX. The Bleeding Tendency of Obstetric Accidents, 224

"TOXEMIA OF PREGNANCY".....	224
INTRAUTERINE FETAL DEATH.....	226
HEMORRHAGIC ACCIDENTS AT TIME OF DELIVERY.....	226
Amniotic Embolism.....	228
Premature Separation of Placenta.....	230
TREATMENT.....	231

X. The Bleeding Tendency of Dysproteinemias; 235

PURPURA OF MULTIPLE MYELOMA.....	235
PURPURA OF AMYLOIDOSIS.....	238
PURPURA OF IDIOPATHIC HYPERGLOBULINEMIA.....	241
PURPURA OF CRYOGLOBULINEMIA.....	244
PURPURA OF MACROGLOBULINEMIA.....	247
GENERAL IDEAS RELATIVE TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF DYSPROTEINEMIA.....	248
TREATMENT OF THE PURPURIC MANIFESTATIONS OF DYSPROTEINEMIA.....	250

XI. General Considerations on the Treatment of Hemorrhagic Disorders, 251

LOCAL MEASURES.....	251
BLOOD, PLASMA AND DERIVATIVES.....	253
PURIFIED PLASMA FRACTIONS.....	257
SUBSTANCES WITH ILL-DEFINED EFFECTS ON THE HEMOSTATIC MECHANISM.....	261

XII. Hereditary Aspects of the Hemorrhagic Disorders, 264

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS.....	264
VASCULAR PSEUDOHEMOPHILIA.....	265
HEMORRHAGIC TELANGIECTASIA.....	265
HEMOPHILIA AND RELATED STATES.....	268

Appendix: Technics in the Study of Hemorrhagic Disorders, 271

MATERIALS.....	275
Anticoagulants.....	275
Sodium citrate.....	275
Sodium oxalate.....	275
Ion-exchange resins.....	276
Sequestrene- Na_2	276
Heparin.....	276
Coagulants.....	276
Calcium chloride.....	276
Thromboplastin.....	276
Thrombin.....	277
Other Reagents.....	278
Veronal buffer.....	278
Imidazole buffer.....	278
"Deprothrombinized plasma".....	278
Labile factor-free plasma.....	278
Stable factor-free plasma.....	279
Plasma free of stable factor and prothrombin.....	279
Stored serum.....	279
Preparation of purified prothrombin.....	279
Bovine fibrinogen.....	280
Preparation of platelet suspensions.....	280
General considerations regarding preparation and storage of the various reagents.....	280
Coating of Glassware, Needles, etc.....	281
TECHNICAL PROCEDURES.....	283
General Considerations.....	283
Enumeration of Platelets.....	283
Indirect method.....	284
Direct method on capillary blood.....	285
Direct method on venous blood.....	286
Technics for the Determination of Capillary Fragility.....	286
Technic for the Determination of Bleeding Time.....	288
Clot Retraction Test.....	291
Whole blood clot retraction.....	291
Plasma clot retraction.....	291

Evaluation of the Vascular Function: Capillary Microscopy..	292
Tests for the Evaluation of the Coagulation Mechanism.....	292
Clotting time of whole blood.....	292
Prothrombin consumption test.....	294
Thromboplastin generation test.....	297
Determination of prothrombin activity of plasma by the one-stage method of Quick.....	300
Determination of plasma prothrombin activity by "di- luted plasma" methods.....	303
Determination of the concentration of prothrombin.....	304
Determination of the activity of labile factor.....	305
Determination of the activity of stable factor.....	305
Determination of stable factor as proconvertin.....	307
Simple tests for the qualitative detection of labile and stable factor deficiency.....	307
Determination of fibrinogen.....	308
Detection of anticoagulants.....	309
Detection of fibrinolysis.....	314
Detection of platelet agglutinins.....	315
References to technical procedures.....	318
ADDENDUM.....	320
REFERENCES.....	322
INDEX.....	358

The Normal Hemostatic Process

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

IT IS generally agreed that a normal hemostatic mechanism is a necessity for survival. The small repeated traumas of every-day life produce minor injuries to the blood vessels, leading to the ever-present danger of spontaneous hemorrhage. Extrinsic trauma by severing blood vessels results in bleeding that requires prompt control. The prevention of spontaneous bleeding and the control of traumatic hemorrhage require the perfect integration of a number of elementary mechanisms without which exsanguination might conceivably result from any injury however slight. Thus, the vascular wall must have normal resistance and contractibility. The platelets and the many factors which participate in the coagulation process must be normal not only in number or concentration but in their activity. It is certain that the very intricacies of these mechanisms afford many possibilities for insufficient hemostasis with resultant bleeding.

The relative importance of the various hemostatic mechanisms differs greatly from one species to another, and, in man also depends upon the size of the affected vessel. In the lower forms of life, the relatively simple functions of agglutination of platelets at the site of vascular injury, vasoconstriction, and the direct adhesion of the endothelial surfaces are mechanisms sufficient to control hemorrhage. However, when blood circulates within the vessels under positive pressure, as in mammals, these mechanisms may become inadequate. The formation of a solid clot of fibrin at the site of vascular injury may then represent an effective means of local tamponade. In man, the relative importance of platelet agglutination, endothelial adhesion, vasoconstriction and fibrin formation vary greatly in relation to the size of the injured vessel and the rate of blood flow in the area. Direct adhesion of the endothelial surfaces and local agglutination of platelets may be sufficient to insure efficient hemostasis following the injury of small venules and capillaries.¹⁰⁵ The control of severe hemorrhage from a large arterial vessel may fail, however, until the drop in blood pressure within the vessel, following serious loss of blood, permits the local accumulation of thrombin and fibrin. In such cases, hemostasis is greatly favored when a vessel lies against a hard

TABLE 1.—*The Physical Phases of Hemostasis Following Vascular Injury Arranged in Chronologic Order (A Hypothesis)**

(A) TEMPORARY HEMOSTASIS

1. Reflex, temporary, localized vasoconstriction (slowing of circulation within the vessel at the site of injury)
2. Agglutination of platelets

{	prolonged, generalized vasoconstriction (due to release of serotonin)	{	activation of thromboplastin
{	coagulation of blood	{	formation of thrombin
		{	formation of fibrin
3. Retraction of the clot (perhaps also some lysis of the clot)

(B) PERMANENT HEMOSTASIS

4. "Organization" of the clot
5. Recanalization of the vessel and extension of a new endothelial lining.

* This hypothesis emphasizes the prominent role of platelets in the process of hemostasis. Platelets: (a) mechanically plug injured areas of the vessel; (b) supply a vasoconstrictor agent (serotonin); (c) help to initiate the process of blood coagulation by supplying a factor indispensable for the activation of thromboplastin; (d) supply accessory substances, each accelerating distinct phases of the blood coagulation process; (e) are indispensable for the retraction of the clot.

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surface (bone, ligaments, cartilage, etc.). The collection of blood outside the vessel compresses it against the hard, unyielding surface, which then acts as an efficient hemostatic agent.

The complexity of the hemostatic process can probably be illustrated best by reviewing briefly the sequence of events which follows the injury of small arteries and arterioles (the most frequently affected vessels) in the event of trauma (table 1). *Vasoconstriction*, limited to the area of injury and of temporary nature (fifteen to thirty seconds), quickly follows injury of the skin and vessels. Probably mediated through an "axonic reflex," its physiologic significance is rather obscure. Many investigators believe that the phase of vasoconstriction may enhance the later phases of the hemostatic process since the consequent reduction of speed of blood flow in the area might conceivably cause platelets to draw closer to the vessel wall and thus agglutinate more readily at the site of vascular injury. The next step, the *agglutination of platelets* in any area where the continuity of the vascular wall has been interrupted, may be considered the key mechanism of hemostasis.⁶¹⁵ Platelet deposition may, of course, mechanically plug areas where the continuity of the vessel has been lost. But of greater importance is the release of powerful "chemical" factors from platelets, following their agglutination and subsequent lysis. As this occurs, pronounced, generalized and persistent vasoconstriction sets in. Vessels, both injured and intact, local and distant, are effectively con-

tracted for as long as thirty minutes. This vasoconstriction appears to be due to the release by lysed platelets of serotonin (5-hydroxytryptamine), which is also found in the serum after completion of coagulation. Shortly thereafter fibrin threads become visible and a solid plug of fibrin is formed (*fibrin clot*). The fibrin clot soon begins to retract and, by approaching the wall of the vessel, may assure better control of bleeding. The *temporary phase* of hemostasis is thus completed. The clot is then partly digested and is later invaded by connective tissue (*organization*). The gap in the vessel wall is then permanently sealed off (*permanent hemostasis*) and from then on a slow process of recanalization of the vessel begins, which may take weeks or months. Finally, a new endothelium, proliferating from normal areas, invades and relines the vessel in its entirety.

This short description of the process of hemostasis suggests that normal hemostasis can occur only when the various mechanisms concerned are coordinated in optimal activity. Recognized today as important for normal hemostasis are the vascular mechanism, the platelets, the blood coagulation mechanism, and fibrinolysis. These various mechanisms, although quite distinct from each other, are very closely integrated, as is clearly revealed by studying the pathogenesis of bleeding in various types of hemorrhagic disorders. *Thus, a single abnormality of one of the hemostatic mechanisms may not result in bleeding, if all others are normal.* For example, patients with afibrinogenemia may have but little spontaneous bleeding, although it would be impossible to think of any more serious breakdown of the coagulation mechanism. As a corollary to the above statement, *severe spontaneous bleeding usually requires the involvement of more than one elementary hemostatic mechanism.* Thus, the severe mucosal bleeding of the acute variety of idiopathic thrombocytopenic purpura may be due not only to platelet deficiency but to a simultaneous abnormality of the small vessels. In parenchymal liver disease, not only is the concentration of the various coagulation factors reduced, but vascular resistance is decreased, while plasma antithrombin titer and fibrinolytic activity may be increased.^{258, 638}

It should also be stated that therapeutic agents may affect more than one hemostatic mechanism simultaneously, a fact which again emphasizes their essential functional unity. A very interesting relationship, for example, exists between vitamin K deficiency and vascular fragility.^{212, 638} In dicumarol intoxication, hypoprothrombinemia is accompanied by increased vascular fragility, and capillary bleeding is frequent. Both abnormalities are promptly corrected by the administration of vitamin K₁. Also in parenchymal liver disease, low plasma prothrombin activity and positivity of the tourniquet test are fairly well correlated, and both are corrected by the administration of large doses of vitamin K₁, provided