Communications

“Do you do Du?”

To the Editor:

Congratulations to Paul Schmidt on his approach to this vexing problem, one, I might add, that is of much greater concern to North Americans than to the rest of the world. He does not, however, answer the puzzling question of why “to do a test for Du” tends to be thought of as something quite different from D grouping. This phenomenon explains, in part, the array of terms outlined by Duckett and Morrison.

In response to the Editor’s challenge, I can only reiterate that “routine use of the term D⁴ should be abandoned” and that “D-positive (weak)” should be substituted if IAT tests with IgG anti-D should “in my opinion, continue to be done.”

One point raised by Duckett and Morrison needs clarification: The term D⁴ variant (or D variant, for that matter) should be used only when a D- (or Dpositive) person has formed anti-D and it is, therefore, probable that a portion of the Dmosaic on their red cells has been altered, replaced, or is missing.

I do not know what Stratton had in mind when he introduced the term D⁴, but to me the “u” has always stood for “unimportant.”

B. P. L. Moore, D.Sc., M.D.
Canadian Red Cross Blood Services
222 St. Patrick Street
Toronto, Ontario, CANADA

References

To the Editor:

Hooray for Peter Issitt! He is right to denounce my use of gene symbols in describing red cells and in pointing out that by so doing, I have been guilty of just such a lapse as I was so roundly condemning in my letter. It just shows how careful we have to be in our choice of words and is a perfect example of how people who live in glass houses ought to refrain from throwing stones.

Actually, there was another matter on which I wanted to comment. I apologize for venturing to intrude again into your correspondence columns, but there is an aspect of an article in an earlier issue of Immunohematology that needs to be corrected.

In her case report of an ABO discrepancy caused by EDTA in commercial reverse grouping cells, Monica Tobar lists, under “Methods and Materials,” the commercial suppliers of the Reagent Red Blood Cells used in her study. Gamma Biologicals appears second in the list, which may lead your reader mistakenly to suppose that we are Source No. 2 in Table 1 and are therefore one of two manufacturers mentioned that include EDTA in the formulation of their red cell suspending medium. Such is not, in fact, the case.

Of the manufacturers listed, the two that add EDTA to their reverse grouping cells are Ortho Diagnostics and American Dade; hence, to tally with the earlier order, the sources in Table 1 should have been listed in the order 1, 3, 2, 4.

This matter is only raised to set the record straight in case any of your readers may have been misled. No claim is made that there is virtue in omitting EDTA from the formulation of these products, nor is it proposed that it is desirable to include it. There are equally persuasive arguments on both sides of the question. In the end, all that really matters is that the user is aware of the potential for error either way, of which the “Discussion” section of Ms. Tobar’s paper gives a sensibly balanced view.

John Case, FIMLS
Gamma Biologicals, Inc.
3700 Mangum Road
Houston, TX 77092

References