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Blood Groups, Platelet Antigens, and Granulocyte Antigens

Harriet S. Meyer

Print Publication Year: 2007 Published Online: 2009
ISBN: eISBN:
Item type: section
Publisher: Oxford University Press
DOI: 10.1093/jama/9780195176339.021.223

[A]lthough erythrocytes have traditionally been considered relatively inert cellular containers of hemoglobin, they are in fact active in a variety of physiologic processes.

L. Calhoun and L. D. Petz(p1843) Blood groups are characterized by erythrocyte (red blood cell) antigens with common immunologic properties (eg, group A). Blood group systems are series of such antigens encoded by a single gene or by a cluster of 2 or 3 closely linked homologous genes (eg, ABO system). There are about 600 recognized erythrocyte antigens. The International Society of Blood Transfusion (ISBT) designates around 270 blood group antigens. Of these, around 250 belong to 1

Blood Groups

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Print Publication Year: 2007 Published Online: 2009
ISBN: eISBN:
Item type: section
Publisher: Oxford University Press
DOI: 10.1093/jama/9780195176339.022.434

Blood groups are characterized by erythrocyte (red blood cell) antigens with common immunologic properties (eg, group A). Blood group systems are series of such antigens encoded by a single gene or by a cluster of 2 or 3 closely linked homologous genes (eg, ABO system). There are about 600 recognized erythrocyte antigens. The International Society of Blood Transfusion (ISBT) designates around 270 blood group antigens. Of these, around 250 belong to 1 of 29 systems., (Other antigens remain in officially designated series or collections.) Some antigens are erythrocyte-specific; others appear widely, but specifically, on cells of other organs and tissues.

Platelet-Specific Antigens

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Print Publication Year: 2007 Published Online: 2009
ISBN: eISBN:
Item type: section
Publisher: Oxford University Press
DOI: 10.1093/jama/9780195176339.022.435

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The current system of human platelet antigen (HPA) nomenclature, adopted in 1990, is overseen by the Platelet Nomenclature Committee of the ISBT and the International Society on Thrombosis and Haemostasis. As with blood groups, there are platelet antigen systems and specific antigens within those systems. The HPA nomenclature pertains to "all protein alloantigens expressed on the platelet membrane, except those coded by genes of the major histocompatibility complex (MHC)."(p241) (See , Immunology, HLA/Major Histocompatibility Complex.) Currently, there are 6 HPA systems: HPA-1, HPA-2, HPA-3, HPA-4, HPA-5, and HPA-15. Complete tables of HPA terms are available at the IPD-HPA Database, http://www.ebi.ac.uk/ipd/hpa/.

Granulocyte Antigens

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Print Publication Year: 2007 Published Online: 2009
Publisher: Oxford University Press
ISBN: eISBN:
DOI: 10.1093/jama/9780195176339.022.436
Item type: section

The Granulocyte Antigen Working Party of the ISBT has formulated rules for well-defined human neutrophil antigens (HNAs), as presented in the following tabulation, although at this writing they have not met with universal acceptance., See also , Immunology, Immunoglobulins, for Fc receptor terminology and , Immunology, Lymphocytes, for CD terminology.

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