

immunoregulatory CD4⁺ T cells. Because the HBeAg is a secreted protein, it has the potential to activate or down-regulate CD4⁺ helper cells as well as be a target for CD8⁺ CTL. This is relevant because an immunoregulatory function for serum HBeAg has been demonstrated in a transgenic mouse model (6, 7).

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Re: Postmarketing Adverse Events Related to Sotradecol (Sodium Tetradecyl Sulfate-Sclerosing Agent)

TO THE EDITOR: Recently, we reviewed postmarketing adverse events related to sotradecol (sodium tetradecyl sulfate-sclerosing agent). There were six postsclerotherapy bacterial peritonitis reports in the Food and Drug Adminis-

tration's Adverse Event Reporting System (AERS). These cases were published in this journal in 1991 by Schembre and Bjorkman (1). It appeared to us that Case #1 (D.G., 47-yr-old male) and Case #5 (D.G. 47-yr-old male) were the same patient based on their clinical presentation, patient's initials, ages, other relevant histories, and laboratory values. Therefore, we decided to count them as one case to a total of five cases (instead of six). It appeared to be an inadvertent error during the process. We greatly appreciate your comments on our interpretation.

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Response to Dr. Bonnel

TO THE EDITOR: After reviewing our article in your journal (1) it does appear very likely that we inadvertently included the same patient in our analysis twice. It is unclear exactly how this happened and surprising (and a little distressing) to us that this did happen. Unfortunately, the original notes from this study are now gone, and the patient records would be difficult to identify at this late date. However, as Dr. Bonnel notes, the similarities in the cases are too similar to have occurred by random chance. We apologize for any confusion or difficulty this inaccuracy may have caused.

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