

**BACTERIOLOGICAL, PATHOLOGICAL AND IMMUNOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF AN
EPIZOOTIC OF *Klebsiella aerogenes* INFECTION IN SPRAGUE-DAWLEY RATS**

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Reports of natural *Klebsiella* infections in rodents are scanty. Over 80 rats of a Sprague-Dawley stock were involved in an epizootic of cervical, axillary, inguinal or intra-abdominal suppuration caused by a single strain of *Klebsiella aerogenes* of low lethal virulence. The cervical lesions involved the salivary glands which showed histopathological appearance of 'fibroadenosis'. The development of this appearance as secondary to the infection and not as a primary glandular abnormality was suggested by the reproduction of similar lesions in uninfected rats of the same colony by subcutaneous infiltration of the strain. Evidence is presented for the origin of the natural lesions as a lymphadenitis in the respective sites.

The finding of a significant deficiency of the humoral immune response to sheep red blood cells as measured by the haemolytic plaque cell assay in the spleen and by haemagglutinating antibody titres, suggested that congenital immunodeficiency predisposed this stock to the *Klebsiella* infection.