

A STUDY OF HISTOLOGICAL PATTERNS OF
ENLARGED LYMPH NODES IN THE LOWER CERVICAL REGION

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Enlarged cervical nodes are a common clinical finding. Such enlargement is attributed to a variety of causes, the commonest of which is recurrent or smouldering infections of the throat. An attempt was made, using autopsy material, to examine whether further light could be shed on such pathology.

Seventy successive autopsies coming within the purview of the Forensic Medicine Department of the Colombo Medical Faculty were used for the purpose. The cervical region was dissected carefully, and it was found that 62 of them had lower cervical glands of more than 1 cm in maximum diameter. These were examined microscopically, after usual fixation and staining with Haematoxyline and Eosin. Other relevant autopsy findings, and the cause of death were also recorded.

Twenty nine nodes showed marked dilatation of the sinuses which were filled with macrophages and histiocytes. Some also contained a few polymorphs, eosinophils and plasma cells.

Twenty two lymph nodes had changes of chronic nonspecific lymphadenitis. These showed follicular hyperplasia, prominence of post capillary venules, increased number of immunoblasts, plasma cells, histiocytes and capsular fibrosis.

Six nodes showed some changes of chronic nonspecific lymphadenitis with prominent sinus pattern.

One node showed some changes of chronic nonspecific lymphadenitis with follicular hyperplasia. 4 lymph nodes had thick fibrotic capsules with marked congestion.

In conclusion 46 per cent of the enlarged nodes had sinus hyperplasia, probably as a result of draining infectious foci from adjacent tissues like the throat, trachea and apex of the lung.

46 per cent of the nodes showed a chronic nonspecific lymphadenitis as a result of both immune as well as inflammatory response.

A gland with a diameter of 1 cm or more should be palpable clinically. The findings indicate therefore that the norm in the lower cervical region would be the presence of palpable glands. There pathology is non-specific.