Platelet Function Measurement

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Contents

- Role of Platelets in Hemostasis
- Various Platelet Function Tests
- Future Directions



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Platelet Morphology



Blood 2010;115:3801-9





Global Scheme of Hemostasis



Primary Hemostasis



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Perspectives

- Important role in diagnosis of many congenital and acquired bleeding disorders
- Testing of platelet function has not been standardized
- Challenges to test standardization
 - Heterogeneity in platelet disorders
 - Lack of diagnostic criteria
 - Limited evidences
 - Few guidelines on testing
 - No guidelines on test interpretation



Bleeding Time (BT)





- By Duke (1910) & Ivy (1941)
- In vivo test
- Measure of primary hemostasis
- Rarely used in developed nations
- Highly dependent on operator
- Influenced by a variety of variables
- Insensitive to mild disorders
- Now replaced by many alternatives

Platelet Aggregometer





Measure light transmission through a test sample containing platelets in suspension that increases when platelets are aggregated by agonists

Platelet Aggregometer



A. threshold of 2nd wave aggregation
B. initial rate of aggregation
C. % maximum aggregation
D. % final aggregation

Platelet Aggregometer

- Most common test used to assess platelet function
- Time consuming, technically challenging
- Affected by many pre-analytical and analytical variables
- Proper use of agonists and concentration
- Diagnosis of several bleeding disorders associated with inherited or acquired platelet dysfunction
- Monitoring of anti-platelet agents: Not encouraged by ISTH
- Standardization: CLSI or ISTH guidelines
- Quality assurance issues: CAP, NASCOLA, UK NEQAS

Platelet Function Analyzer (PFA)-100



Platelet Function Analyzer (PFA)-100

- Most widely used for global primary hemostasis
- Very quick and easy to perform, well standardized
- Small volume of venous blood (0.8 mL)
- Low platelet count (<100,000/uL) or low Hct (<30%) may cause long closure time (CT)
- Very sensitive, but non-specific screening tool
- Normal PFA-100 results can help exclude some severe platelet dysfunctions (Glanzmann's, Bernard-Soulier)
- Role in therapeutic monitoring remains to be established

Flow Cytometer



- Deficiency of surface glycoproteins
- Detection of activated platelets
- Platelet secretion studies

Flow Cytometer

- Diagnosis of Platelet disorders
- Quantification of receptor density
- Detection of activated platelets
- Monitoring platelet responses to agonists
- Monitoring of platelet apoptosis
- Monitoring antiplatelet drugs
- Platelet associated IgG
- Platelet production in thrombocytopenia
- Signal transduction: VASP-P
- Disadvantages: Specialized operator, expensive

Flow Cytometer



Platelet Microparticles



Blood 2009;113:981-2

Point-of-Care Testing (POCT)

- Definition: Diagnostic test at or near the site of patient
- PFA-100, Thromboelastography, VerifyNow, Plateletworks
- Primarily to measure the effect of antiplatelet drugs
- Utility for screening and diagnosis of platelet function defects: Not been examined systematically
- Very limited information about pre-test variables
- Limited QA material available
- Identification of patients with aspirin and clopidogrel resistance

Thromboxane Metabolites

- Serum TxB₂ and urinary 11-dehydro TxB₂
- Amplify the activation response and recruit additional platelets to the site of clotting
- Determined by immunoassays or mass spectrometry
- Indirect measure, not entirely platelet-specific
- Dependent on COX-1 activity
- Potential effects of renal function

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Guidelines on Tests

• ISTH guidelines

- PFA-100 closure time in the evaluation of platelet disorders and platelet function, *J Thromb Haemost 2006*
- Aspirin resistance: position paper of the Working Group on Aspirin Resistance, J Thromb Haemost 2005
- Result of a Worldwide Survey on the Assessment of Platelet Function by Light Transmission Aggregometry, *J Thromb Haemost, in press*
- CLSI guidelines
 - Platelet Function Testing by Aggregometry, CLSI 2008

Algorithm for Tests



Summarized from Clin Chem Lab Med 2010;48:579-98

Summary

- Platelet function tests
 - Traditionally used to diagnose platelet dysfunction
 - Newer tests to supplement bleeding time and platelet aggregation: PFA-100, flow cytometer, VerifyNow, etc.
 - Quality assurance issues
- New role for platelet function testing
 - Monitoring the effects of antiplatelet drugs
- Future challenges
 - Molecular basis of platelet biology
 - Platelet genomics and proteomics
 - Platelet transcriptomics

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