

Histopathological Diagnosis and its Pitfall: Bangladesh Perspective

Histopathological diagnosis and knowledge of pathogenic process is the key to modern medicine. Despite histopathology being the gold standard in available diagnostic techniques, considerable variability exists between different laboratories. This culminates in confusion and distress for patients and clinicians alike. It is of utmost importance to address the issue underlying the diagnostic dilemma to overcome the situation.

In Bangladesh, the errors start from the operation theatre which have persistent consequences. Lack of awareness of health service providers about the importance of fixation in histopathology majorly contributes to diagnostic difficulties. In a large number of cases, specimens are sent in normal saline. Use of improper or inadequate amount of fixative, sending large specimen without slicing results in autolysis of tissue. Especially the hospitals and clinics outside Dhaka can't provide proper fixation due to scarcity of material and expertise.

Provision of proper clinical information regarding age, sex, clinical history, relevant investigations and provisional diagnosis can reduce the diagnostic dilemma in a majority of cases.

Absence of reliability results in dependence of clinicians on few selective laboratories and overburdens those. On the other hand, sending specimen in the laboratory without proper setup also contributes to the diagnostic errors. They provides

histopathological reports in extremely low costing. As a compromise, they practice inadequate grossing and prepares only a few blocks. This results in missing the representative areas in the sections and subsequent errors. Even if the histopathologist provides proper diagnosis, commenting on pathological staging or involvement of resection margins is not possible in malignant tumors.

To avoid the diagnostic dilemma, some clinicians prefer to divide the specimen and send it to different laboratories which further aggravates the situation. In many cases different laboratories receives different type of tissue from the same specimen manifesting in different and often conflicting diagnosis. It results in both psychological and financial sufferings to the patients and their family members. As slides and blocks are available to review in any laboratory in Bangladesh or abroad; it is wise to report the whole specimen in one laboratory and avail further consultation if necessary.

Role of histopathology is crucial in the diagnosis and treatment of disease. A combined, cordial and communicative approach between both clinician and histopathologist can produce credible results that aid in the therapeutic process.

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