β-hCG-Secreting Anaplastic Large Cell Lymphoma

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A 23-year-old male presented with fever and a 1-year history of backache followed by bilateral cervical, axillary, and inguinal lymphadenopathy and left testicular swelling. Ultrasonography of the abdomen showed moderate hepatosplenomegaly with multiple paraaortic and iliac lymphadenopathies. Fine-needle aspiration of the cervical lymph node (LN) gave a differential diagnosis of seminoma versus high-grade lymphoma. In view of the testicular swelling with a high β-hCG level, a diagnosis of germ cell tumor was made and bleomycin, etoposide, and cisplatin were given. Subsequent LN biopsy was suggestive of anaplastic large cell lymphoma (ALCL), and so a CHOP regimen was begun. After 3 cycles of CHOP, there was progressive increase in LN size. The patient was referred to our institution for further evaluation. Bone marrow (BM) aspiration revealed 80% scattered large cells with bizarre nuclei, abundant cytoplasm, and pinkish cytoplasmic secretions (Figure 1); diagnosis of a metastatic tumor was suspected. However, BM biopsy showed features of β-hCG-secreting ALCL (positive for ALK 1, LCA, and β-hCG; negative for PLAP, cytokeratin, and CD30). LN biopsy slides were reviewed and showed histological as well as immunohistochemical features of ALCL (ALK-positive and PLAP-, cytokeratin-, and CD30-negative). Final diagnosis of ALCL with aberrant expression of β-hCG (stage IV B) was made and he was started on the BFM-90 protocol. To the best of our knowledge, this is the second case of ALCL showing aberrant expression of β-HCG reported in the literature [1]. Informed consent was obtained.

Conflict of Interest Statement
The authors of this paper have no conflicts of interest, including specific financial interests, relationships, and/or affiliations relevant to the subject matter or materials included.

References
Figure 1. Bone marrow aspiration showing scattered large pleomorphic atypical lymphoid cells with bizarre nuclei, moderate to abundant cytoplasm, and pinkish cytoplasmic secretions.