

A 78-Year-Old Man with the “Summer Flu” and Cytopenias

(See pages 1479–80 for the Answer to the Photo Quiz)

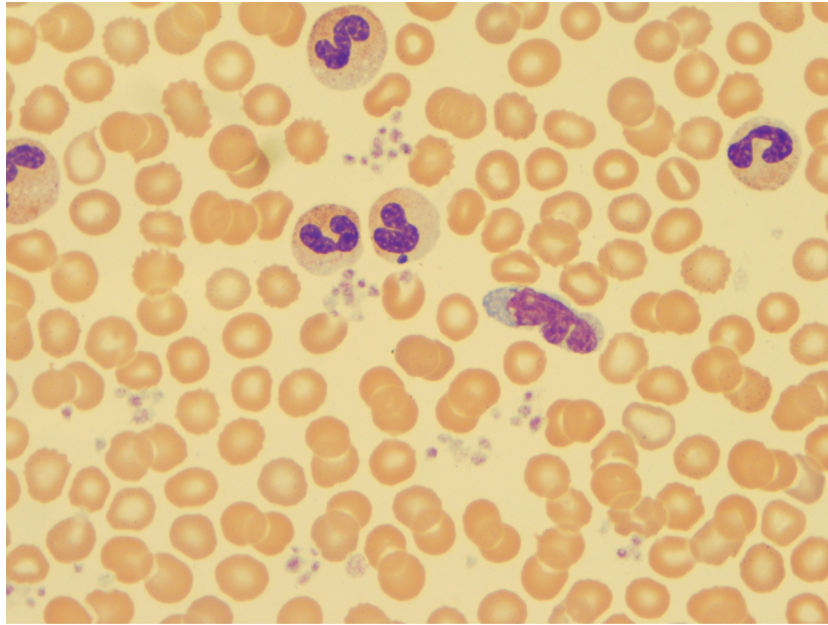


Figure 1. Wright-Giemsa stain of a buffy coat specimen with oil immersion (original magnification, $\times 100$)

A 78-year-old man was brought to the hospital in early summer with a 3-day history of fever, generalized malaise, and weakness that had progressed to the point that he was unable to get out of his bathtub. The patient denied headache, photophobia, rash, sore throat, and pulmonary or gastrointestinal complaints. He denied recent travel. He remembered having removed a nonengorged tick 5 days before the onset of symptoms. His medical history was remarkable only for a remote history of Lyme disease, for which he had received appropriate antibiotic treatment. A physical examination revealed a moderately ill, febrile man (temperature, 38.6°C) with generalized,

nonfocal weakness without rash or hepatosplenomegaly. Laboratory tests revealed leukopenia with lymphopenia (white blood cell count, 4.3 cells/mL with 4% lymphocytes) and thrombocytopenia (thrombocyte count, 65,000 cells/mL), in addition to an elevated aspartate aminotransferase level (89 IU/L), but a normal alanine transaminase level. A Wright-Giemsa stain of a buffy coat specimen obtained from the patient is shown in figure 1.

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