

## The Seashore and the Cliff Crevices: new Clues for the Cytological Diagnosis of the Coccobacilli

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It is a reality that the identification of coccobacilli in cytological smears is less and less taken into account by clinicians. What a pity! In our opinion, the cytologist and the cytotechnologist have the obligation to reflect each of the observed findings in their diagnostic report. Classically they have been very useful...

Regardless of whether the value of positivity or negativity for dysplasia or neoplasia has displaced the true value of the microbiological pattern, we want to highlight in this letter "other diagnostic clues" that we use when teaching and that have proven highly effective in opinion of our students.

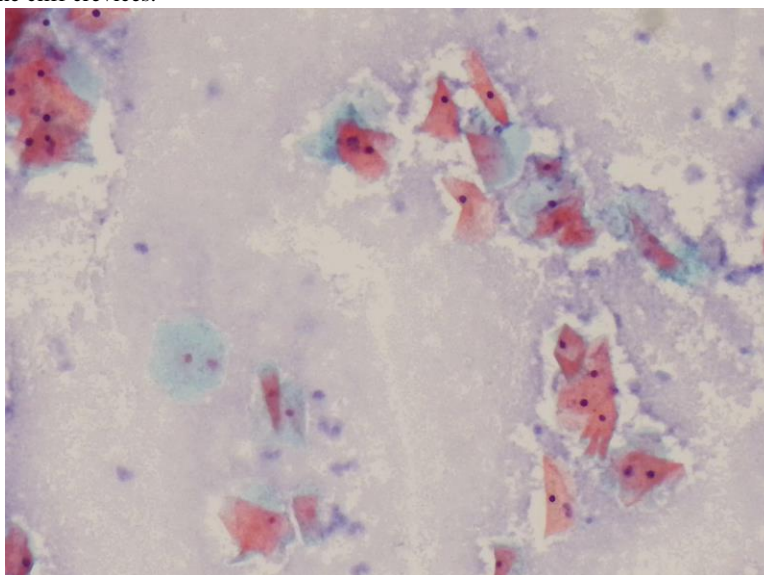
The well-known and "classical" "key cells" identified for the diagnosis of Gardnerella vaginalis infection are an example of such diagnostic clues. In the same line of thought, for the diagnosis of coccobacillary flora using high and low magnifications, we propose to use we propose to use the following mnemonic rules: The seashore and the cliff crevices.

Although classically the comparison of colonies of cocci and/or coccobacilli with "clouds" or "dirty bottom" has been used, a careful morphological examination shows that these colonies approach the cell groups like the sea upon reaching the shore, allowing a white space emulating the foam of the shore to caress the cells of the coast.

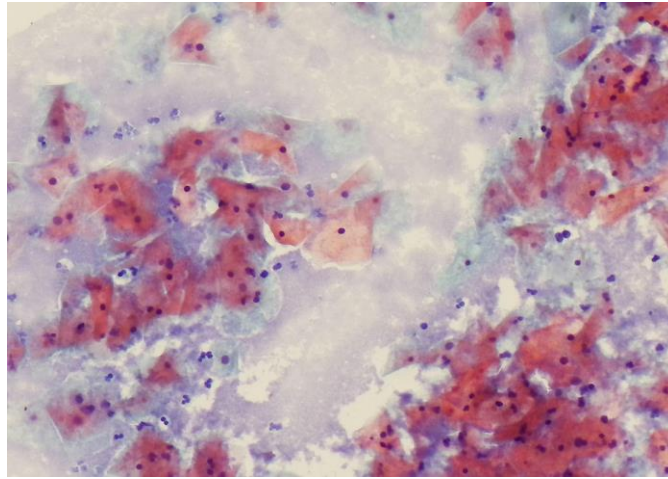
### Pure poetry:

Within these cell groups, continental or insular, a striking network of ridges is observed that help to make the differential diagnosis regarding the presence of dense colonies of lactobacilli, while drawing attention to the presence of this peculiar flora, whether it is an infection or a simple colonization.

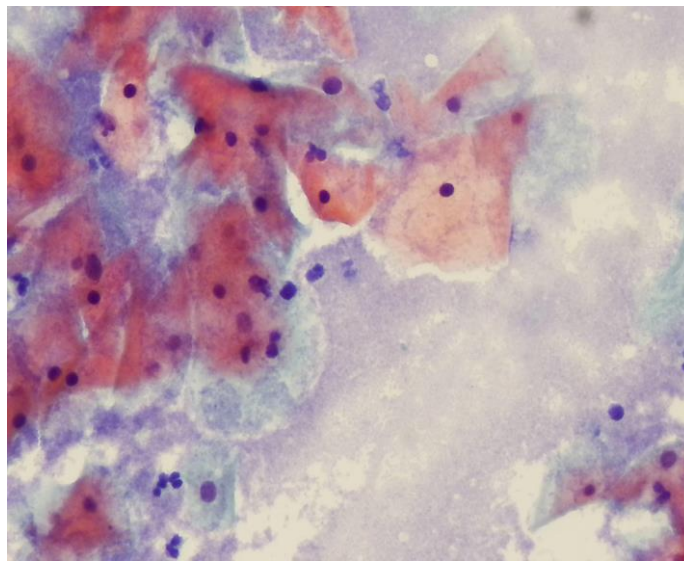
We hope to provide new and useful diagnostic keys, adequately illustrated (Figure 1-, as we have been doing for many years in our teaching facet.



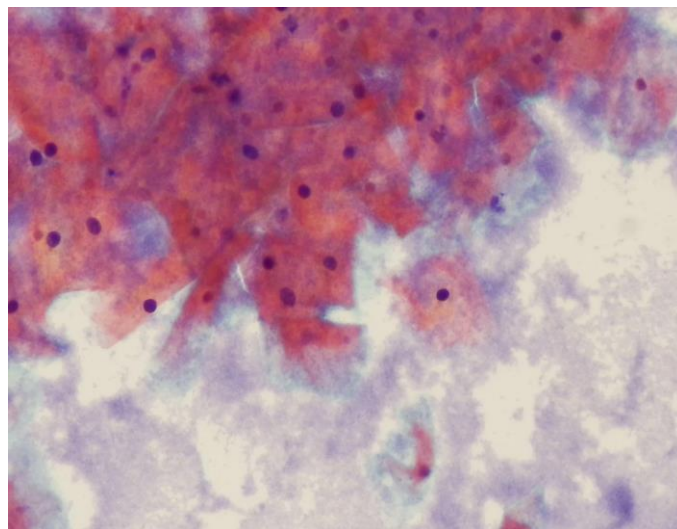
**Figure 1:** The coccobacillary sea reaches the foaming shore. Pap stain 40x



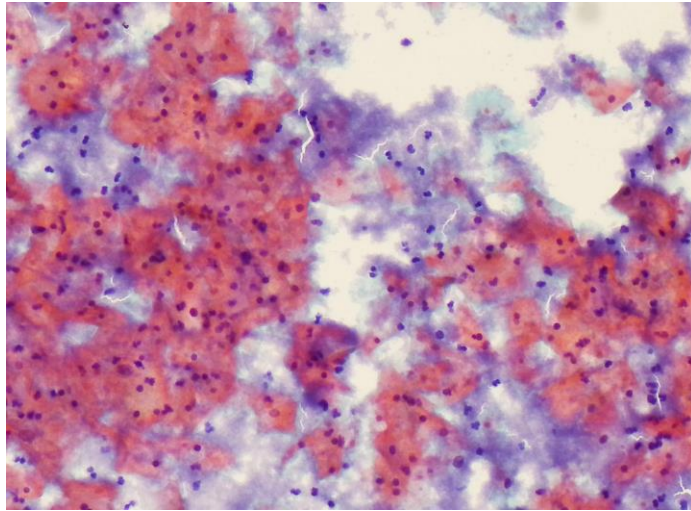
**Figure 2:** The coccobacillary sea reaches the foaming shore. Pap stain 40x



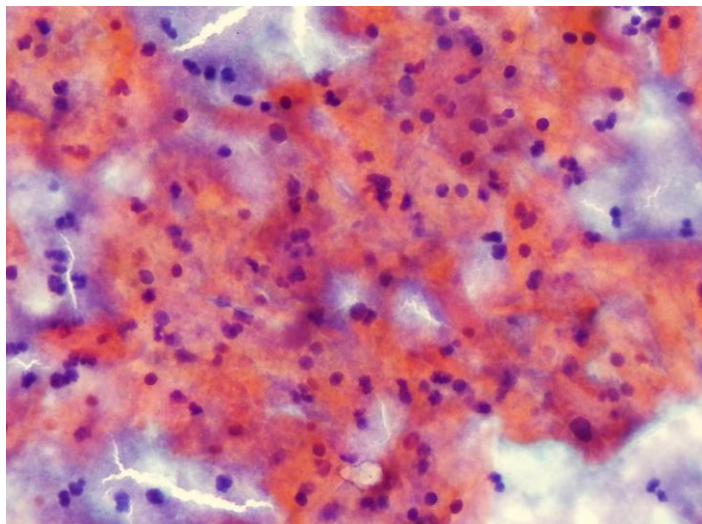
**Figure 3:** The coccobacillary sea reaches the foaming shore. Pap stain 100x



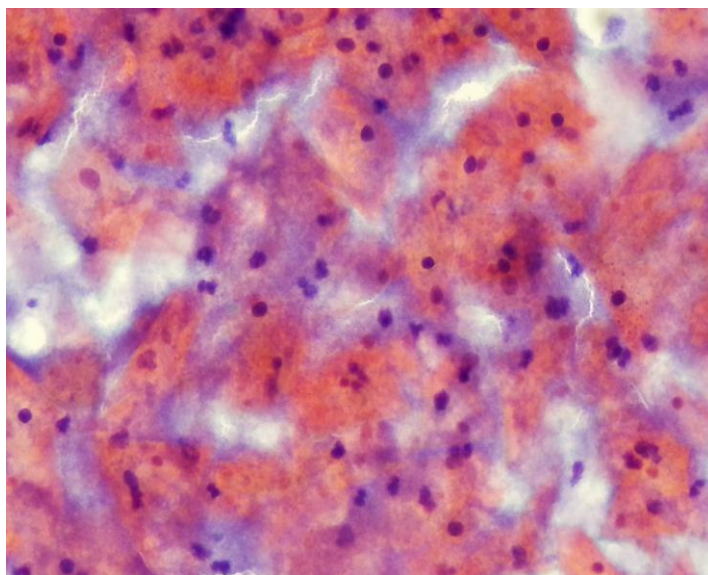
**Figure 4:** The coccobacillary sea reaches the foaming shore. Pap stain 200x



**Figure 5:** The seashore and the Cliff. Pap stain 200x

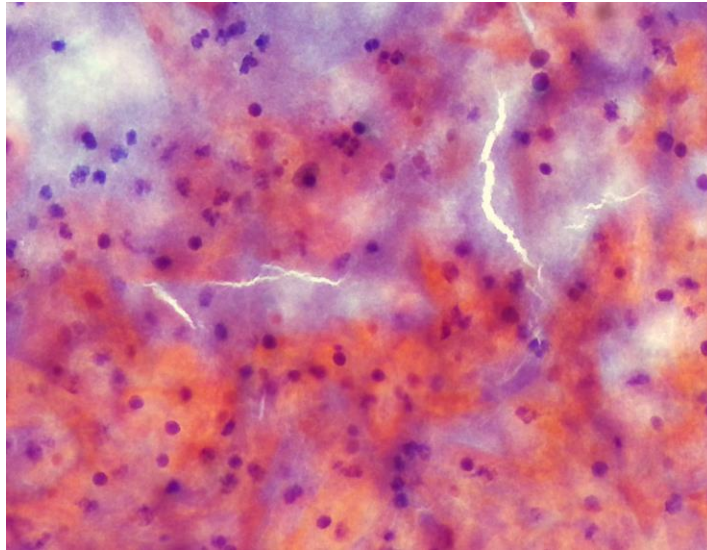


**Figure 6:** The cliff crevices. Pap stain 400x



**Figure 7:** The cliff crevices. Pap stain 400x





**Figure 8:** The cliff crevices. Pap stain 400x



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