



Figure 20-4 Antibody-mediated glomerular injury can result either from the deposition of circulating immune complexes (A) or, more commonly, from in situ formation of complexes exemplified by anti-GBM disease (B) or Heymann nephritis (C). D and E, Two patterns of deposition of immune complexes as seen by immunofluorescence microscopy: granular, characteristic of circulating and in situ immune complex nephritis (D), and linear, characteristic of classic anti-GBM disease (E).

tissue components. What triggers these autoantibodies is unclear. Secondary forms of membranous nephropathy can be experimentally induced by drugs (e.g., mercuric chloride), and graft-versus-host disease (Chapter 6). In some of these situations there may be uncontrolled B-cell activation, leading to the production of autoantibodies that react with renal antigens.

Antibodies Against Planted Antigens

Antibodies can react in situ with antigens that are not normally present in the glomerulus but are “planted” there. Such antigens may localize in the kidney by interacting with various intrinsic components of the glomerulus. Planted antigens include cationic molecules that bind to anionic components of the glomerulus; DNA,