



INFECTIOUS DISEASES (BACTERIAL, FUNGAL, VIRAL, PARASITIC, INFESTATIONS)

## HISTOID LEPROMATOUS LEPROSY CAUSING DISABILITIES IN A TEENAGER UNDER 15 YEARS OF AGE

*J.m. Jubert<sup>(1)</sup> - D. Miyashiro<sup>(1)</sup> - J. Avancini<sup>(1)</sup> - M. A. Giannotti<sup>(2)</sup> - M.a.b. Trindade<sup>(1)</sup>*

*University Of São Paulo Medical School, Department Of Dermatology, Hospital Das Clínicas, University Of São Paulo Medical School, São Paulo, Brazil<sup>(1)</sup> - University Of São Paulo Medical School, Laboratory Of Dermatopathology, Hospital Das Clínicas, University Of São Paulo Medical School, São Paulo, Brazil<sup>(2)</sup>*

**Background:** Leprosy is a neglected disease, and despite availability of effective treatment, it is still a public health issue in some countries, including Brazil. It has a wide spectrum of clinical manifestations with severe skin alterations, neural disability, and consequently, social and functional stigmas. Polymorphism of skin lesions and its insidious development may delay the diagnosis, leading to progression of disabilities and increased risk of transmission. Histoid lepromatous leprosy is a very rare multibacillary form, with well-defined bright papules, plaques and nodules. Histopathology may be similar to dermatofibromas, so clinical suspicion is essential to search for the bacillus. We describe a severe form of leprosy in a young Brazilian patient.

**Observation:** A 14-year-old afrodescendant male presented with skin lesions for 2 years. At first examination, he had hypopigmented macules, multiple papules and nodules on the face, hands, forearms, legs and feet, thickening of ulnar and fibular nerves, loss of sensation on the feet and hands, and ulnar palsy. Skin biopsy showed diffuse and dense lymphohistiocytic infiltrate on the dermis, Fite-Faraco staining showed acid-fast bacilli, confirming the diagnosis of histoid lepromatous leprosy. After 8 months of therapy with dapsone, clofazimine, and rifampicin, skin lesions and neural symptoms improved significantly.

**Key message:** Diagnosis of leprosy in patients with < 15 years of age indicates active circulation of the bacillus. History of skin lesions for two years and diagnosis of leprosy with neural disability appoint that the control program is ineffective. We aim to draw attention to this insidious polymorphic disease, in an era when constant migration may bring patients with leprosy to countries where it is controlled. The efforts of control programs to improve conditions of life and to block the spreading of the disease are essential, and high degree of suspicion is imperative for the early diagnosis, before sequelae are established.

