



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

LEPROSY IN THE TUNISIAN CENTER: WHAT PROFILE AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 21ST CENTURY?

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Background: Leprosy is a rare infectious disease that has become very exceptional in our country thanks to effective therapeutics and efforts undertaken by the governorate. However, the influx of hundreds of Libyan migrants since the revolution in 2011 seems to change its epidemiology in Tunisia.

Objective : The objective of this study is to describe the recent epidemiological-clinical profile of leprosy in the Tunisian center.

Materials and methods: We conducted a retrospective study of all hospitalized leprosy cases in the department of dermatology at Farhat Hached Hospital, Sousse, Tunisia from 2000 to 2018.

Results: We collected 7 patients of mean age of 60 years (35-74). The sex ratio was 0, 75. A family context of leprosy was noted in 4 patients. All patients were Tunisian. Three patients were infected in Libya. Four patients were from Mahdia governorate. 4 patients had lepromatous leprosy, 2 had tuberculoid leprosy and 1 had tuberculoid borderline leprosy. Diagnosis was made based on the anapathological features. All patients received multidrug therapy with good evolution.

Conclusion : The incidence of leprosy decreased significantly in Tunisia thanks to a control strategy established by the World Health Organization in 1983. In the Tunisian center, two outbreaks in regions of Mahdia and Enfidha existed; the 2nd has almost disappeared with the death of the last lepers known in this region. Its prevalence is therefore constant over the last 15 years and has not experienced a recent increase. However, three patients in our series were infected in Libya. Among new cases in the last 15 years, 3 have been reported in 2011, movements between Libya and Tunisia explain probably this increase. Given the long duration leprosy incubation of 5 years on average, vigilance is required to confirm its regression.

