



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

POST-ELIMINATION STATUS OF CHILDHOOD LEPROSY: A REPORT FROM A TERTIARY CARE HOSPITAL IN NORTH INDIA

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Introduction: Leprosy, a chronic inflammatory disease caused by *Mycobacterium leprae*, is a major health problem. Though global elimination of leprosy was achieved in 2000, but a few countries like India continue to have higher levels of prevalence. The proportion of child cases among the newly diagnosed cases reflects the active and recent case transmission in the population and is an epidemiological marker for the level of control in the community.

Objective: To review the post elimination epidemiological and clinicopathological pattern of leprosy in children

Materials and Methods: Medical records of all leprosy cases upto 14 years age registered between January 2006 and December 2017 were retrospectively assessed year wise. Patient data at the time of diagnosis were retrieved onto a predesigned proforma with following variables: age, sex, household contact, number of skin lesions, nerve involvement, clinical classification, presence of lepra reaction, slit-skin smear status, and available histopathology correlates.

Results: In the post elimination years (2006 to 2017), a total of 707 cases of leprosy were registered with 25 child cases i.e an average proportion of 3.53%. The majority of the patients (16, 64%) were in the age group of 11-14 years, followed by 8 patients (32%) of 6-10 years and 1 patient (4%) of 0-5 years. Male :female ratio was 1.08:1. Paucibacillary disease was the most common (60%) with borderline tuberculoid leprosy being the most common clinical presentation (76%). The site of initial lesion was most commonly over the limbs (60%). 1 patient was SSS positive, 2 had reaction (1- ENL, 1- type 1 reaction)and 2 (8%) had deformity i.e claw hand. The presence of household contact was seen in 36%.

Conclusions: The decreasing proportion of multibacillary childhood cases and decreasing deformity points to a better disease control in the community.

