PAEDIATRIC DERMATOLOGY

A CROSS-SECTIONAL DESCRIPTIVE STUDY TO ANALYZE THE SPECTRUM OF HANSEN'S DISEASE AFFECTING THE PAEDIATRIC AGE GROUP IN POST-ELIMINATION ERA WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON HISTOPATHOLOGIC FINDINGS.

Samiksha Pradhan [1] - *Indrashis Podder* [2]

Private, Private, Kolkata, India [1] - *Cmsdh, Cmsdh/ Wbuhs/ Dermatology, Kolkata, India* [2]

Background: Hansen's disease affects the skin and nerves, often resulting in disabilities. Despite being officially eliminated from India, cases are still being reported from several areas. Childhood leprosy is a strong indicator of the disease activity.

Aims and Objectives: To assess the clinico-demographic profile of Hansen's disease in the pediatric age group (<16 years) and clinico pathological correlation.

Materials and methods: 32 new children with Hansen's disease diagnosed by clinico-pathological correlation and SSS were evaluated to assess the clinico-demographic profile and other community markers.

Results: Amongst 32 new patients of childhood leprosy (mean age 12.53± 3.01 years; M:F 3.6:1), borderline tuberculoid type (53.1%) was most frequent, followed by tuberculoid (21.9%), lepromatous (12.5%) and pure neuritic types (9.4%). Childhood leprosy constituted about 10% of all new cases. Patch was the commonest clinical presentation, while upper limb was the most favoured site. In almost 80% cases, ulnar nerve was enlarged. Almost 19% of patients presented with disability, most commonly grade 2 disability. Slit skin smear was positive in 21.8%, while 40.6% presented with a granuloma on histology. Histopathological correlation could be obtained for 2/3rd cases, mostly BT type. 68.75% of our cases were categorized as paucibacillary type. Lepra reaction was seen in 18.8% cases, with type 1 and type 2 reactions showing equal incidence.

Conclusion: Childhood leprosy remains a strong indicator of active transmission of leprosy suggesting missed cases even in the post elimination era. Risk of transmission and high rate of disabilities are the major concerns. Thus active intervention is required to control leprosy transmission & prevent disability as per enhanced global strategy of WHO.

Keywords: leprosy, pediatric, post-ellimination