



PAEDIATRIC DERMATOLOGY

CHILDHOOD CUTANEOUS TUBERCULOSIS : A STUDY OF 23 CASES

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Tuberculosis (TB) in children remains a major health problem worldwide, especially in developing countries.

Objective : To describe the epidemiologic and clinical features of pediatric cutaneous tuberculosis CT in Tunisia

Materials and Methods : Retrospective review of all cases of CT in children observed our dermatology department between 1979 and 2018.

Results : Over 40 years, 23 children with CT were collected (0.57 cases/year). There were 9 boys and 14 girls (sex ratio F/M:1.5). The age at the time of diagnosis ranged from 5 months to 16 years. Only a child was diagnosed with a congenital immune deficiency and another with Down syndrome. The mean duration varied from 2 months to 13 years. Fifteen Children had received BCG vaccination. Of the various patterns of CT seen, 12 (52.1%) had lupus vulgaris (LV), 8 (34.4%) had Scrofuloderma and 3 (13%) had tuberculosis verrucosa cutis (TVC). No child had a tubercular chancre or miliary CT neither a tubercular gumma. A total of 6 patients contracted LV after BCG vaccination. The neck and arm were the most common locations of SFD (7 cases) and LV (8 cases) respectively. Classical tuberculous histology was noted in all cases. The tuberculin skin test was positive in all cases, phlyctenular in 5 cases. A case of bone TB was associated with LV. All children have received a treatment of TB. The lesions of 19 patients improved after 6 months on treatment and 4 patients were lost to follow-up. Nevertheless, retractile and atrophic scars have been noted.

Conclusions : In Tunisia, tuberculosis is still endemic (3,000 cases /year). Although the incidence of CT in childhood is rare (1.5%), it should be considered in children presenting with atypical skin lesions suggestive of an underlying infectious etiology. Prevention remains crucial and requires BCG vaccination, screening and treatment of children with bacillary status.

