



TROPICAL DERMATOLOGY

DESERT DERMATOSIS: CURRENT PATTERN OF NON INFECTIOUS DERMATOSIS IN THAR DESERT

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INTRODUCTION: Desert dermatology describes the cutaneous changes and the diseases affecting those living in the desert. The Thar Desert, also known as the Great Indian Desert, is a large arid region in the north western part of the Indian subcontinent. About 40% of the total population of Rajasthan live in the Thar Desert.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES: To study various non infectious dermatosis prevalent in the arid Thar desert region.

MATERIAL & METHODS: This is a descriptive study involving various dermatoses seen in patients residing in the Thar desert region over a duration of 2 years.

OBSERVATIONS: Apart from infections, which were the most common condition seen among this population, non infectious dermatosis was also seen in abundant number of patients. Among non infective conditions, eczemas were the most common and comprised 36.3% of all cases and 26.1% of all non infective conditions. Discoid eczemas were the most common single type of eczema seen (24.6% of all eczemas, due to dry weather coinciding with its known predisposition). Acne and rosacea comprised 12.1% of all and 17.6% of noninfective dermatoses. Pigmentary disorders comprised 16.1% of all dermatoses and 18.4% of all noninfective disorders. Photodermatoses accounted for 15.3% of all skin conditions seen in this study. Psoriasis accounted for 5.3% of the patients. Lichen planus constituted 2.1% of the total cases and 2.7% of non infective dermatoses. Neoplastic disorders, probably related in some way to increased sun exposure, comprised 5.1% of patients. Xerosis, atopic dermatosis were seen in 9.2% of population. Desert sweat dermatitis and solar elastotic degeneration were another specific condition found to have an increased incidence.

CONCLUSION: The concept of desert dermatology needs to be understood in more details to provide better care to those suffering from desert dermatoses.

