



TROPICAL DERMATOLOGY

## SKIN AND HIV INFECTION: OUR EXPERIENCE IN ETHIOPIA

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**Introduction:** The diagnosis, treatment and prevention of dermatological diseases in HIV patients in long-term care facilities particularly nursing facilities, remains a challenge for all health providers who care for this population. In immunocompromised individuals the dermatological infections often have an atypical presentation and can be difficult to eradicate, making both the diagnosis and treatment challenging.

**Objective:** Sub-Saharan Africa has the highest incidence of HIV/AIDS infection in the world. Lack of access to necessary antiretroviral therapy leads to the increased presence of advanced AIDS and severe pathological conditions related to the infection. The skin represents a sensible indicator of HIV infection and multiple skin disorder are part of the list established from WHO for the staging of HIV/AIDS.

**Methods:** We report our experience at the Italian Dermatological Centre (IDC) in Mekelle and at the Maiani District Hospital (MDH) of Sheraro, in Tigray, the northern regional state in Ethiopia.

**Results:** From January 2005 to December 2017, 1,815 HIV positive patients have been examined with related skin-disorders. Commonest alterations we recorded included impetigo, dermatophytosis, viral warts and molluscum contagiosus. Atypical clinical presentations (extensive distribution of the skin lesions or presence of multiple infections in the same patient) represented HIV indicator. Papular Pruritic Eruption (PPE) represented an important role in the early detection of HIV infection and one of the most common symptoms encountered in patients with HIV.

Investigations for STIs showed high incidence in HIV patients and, in our experience, genital warts represented the commonest.





Conclusion: IDC, MDH and we improve diagnosis and management skill of peripheral health workers on common skin condition related to HIV/AIDS. We believe in the importance of spreading this dermatological skill to permit early detection and diagnosis of HIV infection.

