



EPIDEMIOLOGY

IMPORTED SKIN DISEASES IN MIGRANTS

Bernard Naafs ⁽¹⁾

Foundation Global Dermatology, Munnekeburen The Netherlands; Regional Dermatology Training Centre (RDTC), Moshi Tanzania; Ayder Hospital Department of, Dermatology, Munnekeburen, Netherlands ⁽¹⁾

Immigrants in this world are a known entity. Often invited, they are necessary for the economy. They bring with them their specific skin with their diseases, infectious, environmental, genetic or related to their customs. As Dermatologist we have learned to deal with it in a certain way. But at present there is a new problem: migrants, desperate people who look for safety or a better life. They come by thousands to the West but stay with millions in their own regions. They walk and sleep in cold or hot weather under difficult circumstances, exploited and abused. And in the end they are kept in places where they often do not want to be. They come from e.g. Syria, the Middle East, Iran, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, North and West Africa, Eritrea and Somalia, Middle and South America (Venezuela). Most are cared for in the surrounding countries.

They bring with them conditions due to the travel and due to what they had to endure. For the dermatologists it is important to realize what kind of conditions they present with: torture scars, self-inflicted conditions in order to strengthen their case, inherited conditions that are presented as due to their suffering, infectious conditions already present or due to rape or prostitution, resulting in STI's. Most of the problems are directly related to the travel and being on the move. Blisters, quench feet, insect bites, whether or not infected: impetigo, scabies, lice. But also they show neglected atopic dermatitis or psoriasis, undefined rashes. However, more than anything else, they show desperation. They may have leishmaniasis (Middle East. Horn of Africa), HIV and HIV related diseases, leprosy, non-venereal positive syphilis serology, fungal infection, vitamin D deficiency or in general malnutrition. These have to be diagnosed and solved in a human way.

