



INFECTIOUS DISEASES (BACTERIAL, FUNGAL, VIRAL, PARASITIC, INFESTATIONS)

OLD PROCEDURE, NEW TECHNIQUE!

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Introduction : Skin slit and scrape (SSS) smear is a simple office procedure routinely performed for assessing the bacteriological and morphological index in cases of Hansen disease. In the conventional method, operator's one hand is used for pinching of the skin. We present a simple modification whereby the operator's hand remains free , compression of the skin is more convenient and the results are better.

Objective: Compararative study regarding pain, clean/blood-tinged smear, solitary/multiple nicks and accidental nick to the operator with the conventional method vis-à-vis the modified method using angled forceps for obtaining slit skin smear for acid fast bacilli.

Material and methods: Sample size – n=90 suspected cases of Hansen disease of both genders and all age groups were included. SSS smear of right ear of all cases was obtained with the conventional method by manual pinching and of left ear, with the modified technique using curved artery forceps for clamping. The comparative study regarding pain, clean/blood-tinged smear, solitary/multiple nicks and accidental nick to the operator was done by charting out the above findings in respect in both the ears. Pain was assessed using a scale- 0 – no pain, 1- mild and tolerable, 2- patient resentful

Results: Pain – right ear: 59 (65.5%),left ear: 19 (21.1%);clean/blood-tinged smear – right ear: blood tinged smears-74 patients (82.2%); left ear: 8 (8.8% patients); solitary or multiple nicks : right ear : 84.4% ; left ear: 4.4%; accidental nick to the operator: right ear- 16 ; left ear- nil

Conclusion: Hence this modified technique was much superior to the conventional one.

