

UNVEILING THE ENIGMA OF LEPROSY: INSIGHTS INTO SYMPTOMS, TREATMENT, AND STIGMA

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ABSTRACT

Leprosy, also known as Hansen's disease, is a chronic bacterial infection caused by Mycobacterium leprae. It primarily affects the nerves, skin, and mucous membranes, leading to numbness, discoloration, and disfigurement. If left untreated, leprosy can cause permanent damage, disability, and disfigurement, but early detection and treatment can cure the disease. Leprosy, a chronic infectious disease caused by the bacterium Mycobacterium leprae, has afflicted humanity for centuries. This study delves into the intricacies of leprosy, exploring its symptoms, treatment modalities, and the social stigma surrounding the disease. By shedding light on the clinical manifestations, medical interventions, and societal challenges associated with leprosy, this abstract aims to enhance understanding and compassion towards individuals affected by this historically misunderstood condition.

Keywords: *Leprosy, Mycobacterium leprae, infectious disease, symptoms, treatment, social stigma, compassion, understanding.*

INTRODUCTION

At some point of its history, leprosy has been feared and misunderstood. For long term leprosy become concept to be a hereditary sickness, a curse, or a punishment from God. earlier than and even after the invention of its biological motive, leprosy sufferers have been stigmatized and refrained from. For example, in Europe at some stage in the middle a long time, leprosy patients had to put on unique clothing, ring bells to warn others that they were near, and even walk on a particular aspect of the road, relying at the direction of the wind. Even nowadays, leprosy remedy has often be fell in separate hospitals and stay-in colonies called leprosariums"s because of the stigma of the sickness. Leprosy has been so normal in various regions as sure times during records this is has inspired paintings and stimulated different cultural practices (Litchfield, AAOHN, 2010). Leprosy is a chronic infectious disease resulting from acid fast bacilli (Mycobacterium leprae). The mode of transmission is breathing and entails extended exposure in early life.

Leprosy, caused by the bacterium Mycobacterium leprae, manifests in various ways, with symptoms primarily affecting the skin, nerves, and mucous membranes. The disease presents as skin lesions, numbness, and muscle weakness due to nerve damage. Leprosy has a spectrum of forms, from a milder, less contagious form known as tuberculoid leprosy to a more severe, highly infectious form called lepromatous leprosy.

Treatment for leprosy typically involves multidrug therapy, a combination of antibiotics that effectively kill the bacteria and prevent its spread. Early diagnosis and treatment are crucial to prevent complications and reduce transmission. Despite effective treatment, the social stigma associated with leprosy remains a significant challenge. Misconceptions and fear surrounding the disease have led to discrimination and social exclusion of individuals affected by leprosy.

Efforts to combat the stigma associated with leprosy include education, awareness campaigns, and advocacy for the rights of those affected. By increasing understanding and compassion towards individuals with leprosy, we can work towards eradicating the social stigma and fostering a more inclusive and supportive environment for those impacted by this ancient disease.

For the duration of beyond, it became believed that sickness changed in to the end result of past sins or punishment via God. The disease is manifested as lesions related to skin, nose, pharynx, larynx and nerves. The lesion is light anaesthetic macular lesion with bilateral ulnar neuropathy, pores and skin nerve involved, trophic ulcers, bone reabsorption, loss of digits.

The ailment is split clinically into two sorts Paucibacillary & Multibacillary. WHO take a look at institution on chemotherapy of leprosy has recommanded more than one drug remedy (MDT) for each Paucibacillary & multibacillary leprosy (D"Almeida, Stephany, 2009).

Leprosy examplifies how the social result of sickness is more hassle a few than actual sickness. Because this sickness no longer best influences bodily degree inflicting disfigurement but it additionally influences mental degree. India has the most important quantity of acknowledged cases of leprosy and northerly place incidentally happens to be endemic for the sickness. WHO lists leprosy as one of the primary fitness troubles of developing nations which includes India, Brazil, Africa, Nepal and Bangladesh. Leprosy is a chronic disease associated with

deformity in some cases, which has given upward thrust to the social stigma and ostracizing of affected person from society (**Park, 2002**).

In March 2005 incidence of leprosy in India became 1.34 according to 10,000 populations presently 24 out of 35 states/UTs have done the goal of elimination. Annual new case detection rate changed into 2.34 consistent with 10,000 populations. On modern-day repute of leprosy in India 2011, there are approximately 209 out of 640 districts wherein the variety of recent instances exceeds the WHO goal of much less than 10 new instances in line with one hundred,

000, "India is the biggest contributor to the world wide burden with one hundred twenty,000 new cases according to 12 months year (**Tahziba,2007**). Ten percentages of the new instances taking place in India youngsters, the who's Menabde said. "The excessive prevalence amongst children shows that the transmission rate may be very high," bringing up the case of Maharashtra, India's richest state and home to the national economic hub of Mumbai. "Simply a couple of months returned, the valuable leprosy division discovered that the number of recent instances in Maharashtra has long past up from 9-10 in line with a hundred, 000 in 2006-07 to 13 in step with 100,000 now. Leprosy may additionally have left the public discourse however it's far nonetheless ordinary in India. In six months from April to September 2016, 79000 leprosy instances were detected consistent with National Fitness Profile 2017. It presently has a prevalence fee of zero.81 per ten thousand. There are 33 leper colonies in one-of-a-kind components of India in which 2192 inmates are dwelling 7 leprosy affected deformed persons have been operated for Reconstructive Surgery (RCS) for correction of deformity (**Oliver,1987**). Leprosy patients are extra susceptible to unfavorable results of bio-psychosocial problems, which include organic issues (lack of hands or ft, foot drop, hypo-pigmented patches, nasal melancholy, lack of cutaneous sensation), mental problems (misery, low self confidence, despair, suicidal tendency, aggressiveness), social issues (illiteracy, unemployment, social isolation, economic instability (Devadas).

Kaur, Van (2003) carried out a observation at the psychosocial impact of leprosy and the subjects mindset in the direction of beggary has been studied. The observe comprised 21 households, along with 22 guys, 21 girls and 40 children. Seventy-one percent of the families here came from Southern India. All the guys and 9 of the ladies were leprosy-affected. Because of leprosy, the social interaction of 85 percent of the interviewees turned into confined to in the colony and of 88% to most effective other leprosy-affected areas.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Raju, Rao (2011) carried out a study to apprehend nature of the clinical and society related issues of leprosy cured people from numerous socio-cultural corporations and expand proper machine to address the present day wishes of leprosy cured, records were collected from leprosy cured, using qualitative strategies together with FGDs, open ended Interviews and participant observation and a quantitative survey method. The findings showed that there has been now not lots exchange inside the socio-cultural and financial state of affairs of the leprosy cured in particular the disabled ones, besides a recognition within the fitness device that their anti leprosy treatment is finished.

Lustosa, Nogueira, Pedrosa, Teles, Campelo (2011) conducted an observational

have a look at the usage of the SF-36 (a selected questionnaire for assessing great of life styles), which sought the determinants of poor excellent of existence amongst human beings with leprosy, outlining the sociodemographic, clinical, and epidemiological characteristics of the 107 patients interviewed. The correlations between the variables showed five determinants of HRQoL: late prognosis, multibacillary forms, reactions, incapacity prognosis grade II, and prejudice. The profile of the individuals showed that leprosy nonetheless affects the decrease social lessons in historically endemic areas, causing high chances of secondary accidents that compromise the work capacity and fine of lifestyle of the affected people, perpetuating the stigma related to the sickness.

Sanyal, Das Gupta, Mahapatra, Samanta S. (2011) did a procedure file on bodily and mental determiners of social functioning in leprosy patients. 90 three leprosy patients (seventy two male and 21 girl) were selected from outpatient department of the hospitals/clinics and their demographic and medical informations had been recorded. The patients were screened for common mental diseases the usage of GHQ-60 (Bengali model). The social functioning changed in to assessed the usage of SSFI. Mean age turned in to 35.19 +/- 12.5 years, 69.9% of the topics were from urban areas. Multibacillary cases accounted for 60.2% of the cases, 21.5% of the patients had deformity, 53.8% of the sufferers screened fine for common place psychiatric diseases. Social functioning impairment of moderate, mild and intense stage became nine.7%, 82.8, and 7.5% respectively. On Univariate evaluation, presence of deformity turned into the most effective variable showing tremendous association with moderate to intense diploma of social impairment. The usage of decision tree (Exhaustive CHAID) analysis, presence of deformity alongside urban residence become strongly anticipated intense social functioning impairment.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, leprosy is a curable chronic bacterial infection that affects the nerves, skin, and mucous membranes. Early detection and treatment with multidrug therapy can prevent disability and disfigurement. Awareness, education, and access to healthcare are essential to control and eliminate leprosy, reducing its social and economic impact.

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