New foci for Cutaneous leishmaniasis - Ankesha District, Amhara region, Ethiopia

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Abstract

Background: Cutaneous leishmaniasis is found in more than 80 countries in the world. With estimated 29 million people at risk and 20,000 to 40, 000 new cases per year Ethiopia is one of the ten high burden countries. From studies so far in more than 90% of the cases *Leishmania aethiopica* is incriminated as the causative species.

Objective: The aim was to investigate cutaneous lesion outbreak in Ankesha district, Awi zone, Amhara region.

Methods: A preliminary rapid assessment survey was done from November 2013 to January 2014. **37** cases and 74 apparently healthy individuals were interviewed. Skin slit lesion sample was taken from 25 cases. Identification of *Leishmania* parasite was done by smear microscopy and culture. PCR; restriction fragment length polymorphism was done for species identification.

Results: Two clinical form of CL were observed; 33 (89%) localized cutaneous leishmaniasis and 4 (11%) diffused cutaneous leishmaniasis. All of CL lesions were observed on the exposed parts of the body such as the face and upper and lower limbs. 16 samples were positive by smear and culture. 6 samples were typed as *L. aethiopica.* The community did not know the cause, transmission and prevention mechanism of CL.

Lessons and Recommendations: We confirmed that the cause of cutaneous lesions among the residents of Sositu Gimjabet kebele, Ankesha district is cutaneous leishmaniasis. The average duration of lesion in the 37 participants was three month showing the probability that CL appeared in this kebele recently. None of the interviewees had knowledge about the cause of CL. The presence of CL in Ankesha was not known before thus underlining the need for further survey to certain the claim of new outbreak, and identify associated risk factors to designed efficient and effective control.

Key words: Cutaneous leishmaniasis, Ankesha, Ethiopia