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Striking ethnic variations in the incidence of pemphigus in the same geographic area

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The epidemiology of pemphigus in different ethnic populations exposed to similar environmental factors is unknown. Trends in the incidence of pemphigus based on an immunopathologically validated cohort were not previously reported. The objective of the current study was to estimate the incidence of pemphigus in Israel and to investigate differences between ethnic populations. Pemphigus incidence was retrospectively estimated from January 2000-December 2015 in two Israeli regions with a total population of 1.56 million inhabitants. A total of 180 pemphigus patients (mean age: 54.70 ± 16 years) were identified. Overall estimated incidence was 7.2 per million inhabitants per year (95% CI, 6.2-8.3). The Jewish population incidence was 3-fold higher than that in Arabs; 9.6 (95% CI, 8.1-11.3) vs. 3.2 (95% CI, 2.2-4.6) cases per million per year, respectively, $p < 0.0001$, and higher among women than men 9 (95% CI, 7.4-10.8) vs. 5.3 (95% CI, 4.1-6.7) cases per million per year, respectively, $p < 0.0001$. Incidence decreased from 8.4 (95% CI, 6.6-10.5) cases per million per year in 2000-2005 to 7 (95% CI, 5.3-9.1) and 6 (95% CI, 4.5-7.9) in 2006-2010 and 2011-2015, respectively ($p = 0.068$). In summary, the incidence of pemphigus in Israel is among the highest reported worldwide, and significantly more frequent among Jews.

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