

Advances and Diagnosis Treatment of Leprosy Disease

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DESCRIPTION

Leprosy, also known as Hansen's disease, is an ancient and debilitating infectious disease that has plagued humanity for centuries. Despite significant advances in medical science, leprosy remains a global health concern, particularly in developing countries. This essay aims to explore the historical background, clinical features, diagnosis, treatment, and social implications of leprosy, highlighting its persistent impact on individuals and communities worldwide.

Leprosy has a long and complex history, dating back thousands of years. This condition is brought up in ancient writings and religious books, which excludes and associated to divine retribution. Leprosy reached epidemic proportions in Europe during the Middle Ages, leading to widespread fear, discrimination, and social isolation of affected individuals. The discovery of *Mycobacterium leprae*, the bacterium responsible for leprosy, in the late 19th century by Norwegian physician Gerhard Armauer Hansen marked a significant milestone in understanding the disease. Leprosy primarily affects the skin and peripheral nerves, leading to various clinical manifestations. The disease progresses slowly, often taking several years for symptoms to appear. Early signs include skin lesions, patches of hypo- or hyperpigmented skin, and decreased sensation in affected areas. As the disease advances, it can cause nerve damage, resulting in loss of sensation, muscle weakness, and deformities. The hands, feet, and face are commonly affected, leading to claw-like hands, foot drop, and facial disfigurement.

Diagnosing leprosy involves a combination of clinical evaluation, skin biopsy, and laboratory tests. The characteristic skin lesions and sensory impairment are key clinical indicators. A skin biopsy is performed to detect the presence of acid-fast bacilli using

microscopic examination or Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) techniques. Early detection and prompt treatment are crucial in preventing further progression and complications. Leprosy is treatable with Multi-Drug Therapy (MDT), a combination of antibiotics that target the causative bacterium. The World Health Organization (WHO) provides free MDT to leprosy-endemic countries. The standard treatment regimen consists of a combination of rifampicin, dapsone, and clofazimine. MDT effectively destroys the germs, stops the spread of the illness, and stops transmission. Long-term treatment may be required, depending on the severity of the disease.

Leprosy carries significant social implications, primarily due to the enduring stigma associated with the disease. The visible deformities caused by leprosy often result in social exclusion, psychological discomfort and a loss of livelihood. Although the disease is curable and no longer highly contagious, the social stigma persists, perpetuating the suffering of those affected. Leprosy remains a global health concern, particularly in low-income countries with inadequate healthcare systems. India, Brazil, and Indonesia account for the majority of cases, but the disease is prevalent in many other regions as well. Leprosy persists in several places due to poverty, overpopulation and poor access to healthcare. Efforts to eliminate leprosy as a public health problem by the year 2030 are underway, focusing on early detection, effective treatment, and social integration of affected individuals.

Leprosy is a chronic illness that has affected everyone for decades and still has a negative impact on both individuals and communities. The epidemic over leprosy is still not completely done, despite substantial advancements in detection, treatment and community acceptance. A complex plan of action focusing on the disease's healthcare, social, and economic aspects is necessary for eliminating it.

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Received: 28-Apr-2023, Manuscript No. JADPR-23-25128; **Editor assigned:** 02-May-2023, PreQC No. JADPR-23-25128 (PQ); **Reviewed:** 16-May-2023, QC No. JADPR-23-25128; **Revised:** 23-May-2023, Manuscript No. JADPR-23-25128 (R); **Published:** 30-May-2023, DOI: 10.35841/2329-8731.23.11.308

Citation: Bao F (2023) Advances and Diagnosis Treatment of Leprosy Disease. Infect Dis Preve Med. 11:308.

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