

LEPROSY

WHO/TDR multicentric trial on 'Uniform MDT regimen for all types of leprosy patients'

Background: WHO/TDR are supporting a multi-centric trial to assess efficacy of a 6-month Multi-bacillary multi-drug therapy (Uniform MDT [U-MDT]) consisting of clofazimine, dapsone and rifampicin for all types of leprosy patients with the objective to assess the efficacy of U-MDT under programme conditions. Main outcome measure is cumulative level of relapse rate not exceeding 5% after 5 years.

Methods: The study is an open design requiring 2500 newly detected, previously untreated patients each in MB and PB groups from India (six centres) and China (two centres). Standardized clinical criteria were used to assess skin lesions in the field.

Results: The study enrolled 3396 patients from November 2003 to November 2008 (India: 3230; China: 166). Of the 3396 patients, 38% were MB and 4% had grade 2 disability. During follow-up, 53 patients developed new lesions. Of these, 47 were on account of reactions. Six patients had clinically confirmed relapse. Three of these relapses occurred in the first year, two were reported during the second year and one patient developed relapse in the third year of follow-up. All these patients were assessed as 'lesion inactive' at the completion of treatment. Subsequently they developed new lesions, and were given another course of U-MDT, and are being followed up. Clofazimine related skin pigmentation was short-lived and was acceptable to patients. Totally 230 patients were lost to follow-up as on November 2008. Of the 3396 patients, 2930 completed treatment. Of the 2930 patients, in 472 (16%) skin lesions were inactive. PB patients responded better than MB patients (23% Vs. 6%). At the end of first (n=2424), second year (n=1945) and third year (n=1265) of follow-up post-U-MDT, in 1082 (45%), 1121 (58%) and 975 (77%) patients, lesions were inactive respectively (51%, 65% and 83% in PB, 35%, 47% and 66% in MB).

Conclusion:U-MDT appears to be promising with respect to clinical status of skin lesions.

Disability status of post - MDT Paucibacillary (PB) leprosy patients after release from treatment (RFT) in South India

Introduction: Leprosy prevalence has come down to elimination stage i.e less than 1 per 10,000 during post-MDT era. Public health administrators felt that in addition to identification of cases through integrated surveillance system, management and rehabilitation of disabled patients is necessary. The literature on development of disabilities in PB patients after RFT is scarce. Hence this study is carried out.

Objective: To assess the disability status among PB Leprosy patients more than 5 years after RFT.

Methodology: Experienced leprosy field investigators from NIE, blinded for earlier status examined all the PB leprosy patients for current disability. (Disability status was assessed based on WHO guidelines 1980). The information on disability status was collected on 1084 patients. The current disability status was compared with disability status at RFT.

Results:

- a) Observed incidence of disabilities is 3.9% (40/1030).
 - b) Incidence of anaesthesia is 2.5% (26/1030) and visible deformity (Grade II and III) 1.4% (14/1030). Recovery from anaesthesia is 79% (34/43). Worsening from anaesthesia to visible deformity is 7%(3/43).
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