

Prescribing Patterns, Adverse Effects and Treatment Outcome of Anti-Leprotic Drugs

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Background

Leprosy continues to be a significant problem in certain pockets of developing countries. India is the leading responsible country for the world-prevalence of leprosy. Globally, 60% of the estimated cases are contributed by India. MDT (Multi-drug therapy), which is the treatment recommended by WHO, cures patients and interrupts transmission of leprosy and prevents disabilities. However, MDT has been associated with problems like undesirable side-effects, poor compliance, drug resistance and high relapse rates. Considering the number of cases contributed by India, it has serious implications. Thus, present study was undertaken to analyse the prescribing pattern and drug-related problems in patients with Hansen's disease.

Aims & Objectives

- To analyse the prescribing patterns of patients with leprosy
- To assess the adverse effects of the drugs used
- To assess the treatment outcome in patients who received MDT.

Materials and Methods

It was a retrospective study in which medical records of patients with leprosy who attended Dermatology clinic at Kasturba Hospital, Manipal in 2011-12 were analysed. Prescribing patterns, adverse-effects, drugs used to treat the side-effects and treatment outcome were recorded in a proforma. Appropriate statistical tests were done to analyse the data.

Results

Records of 100 patients were analysed. Most of the patients were in age group of 30-60 years. The drugs prescribed for leprosy were Dapsone, Clofazimine, Rifampicin and Ofloxacin. Many patients experienced one or more reactional states, majority being recurrent erythema nodosum leprosum (31 patients), including necrotic ENL, bullous ENL and exacerbation of ENL. Type 1 lepra reaction was also common (14 patients). Late Reversal reaction was seen occasionally. Drugs prescribed for these reactions were Prednisolone, Methylprednisolone and thalidomide. Side-effects of MDT were frequent. Dapsone was incriminated in adverse-effects like anemia (13 patients) and Dapsone Hypersensitivity syndrome (4 patients). Other side effects with MDT were deranged LFTs, Neuritis, gastrointestinal problems, fever. 4 patients developed steroid induced diabetes and 5 got pedal edema secondary to treatment with thalidomide. 11 patients were restarted on second course of MDT. Most of the patients reported improvement in symptoms. However, non-adherence to treatment was not uncommon.

Conclusions

The drugs were prescribed as per WHO guidelines. Adverse-effects secondary to current drug regimen are threatening factors in leprosy control. So, there is a need to monitor adverse effects so as to avoid defaulters and improve adhesion to treatment to eradicate Hansen's disease as a public health issue.