

PATTERN OF SKIN DISEASES IN KERALA

C. GANGADHARAN,* A. JOSEPH † AND P. A. SAROJINI ‡

Summary

The present paper is a statistical analysis of the cases which attended the Dermatology Department of the Medical College Hospital, Trivandrum during a period of five years (1967—1971). Skin diseases formed about 10 percent of the total cases which attended the hospital. Of the skin diseases 46.85 percent were infectious and 53.15 percent non-infectious. Fungus infections (18.24%) had the highest incidence among the infectious group and Allergy and Eczema (20.37%) among the non infectious group.

Introduction

In a sub continent like India, with heterogenous customs, religions and languages, a study on the pattern of skin diseases in the various parts will be advantageous to the specialists in the field. Our knowledge on the pattern of skin diseases in India is based on the observations made by a few other authors in the past^{1,2,3,4,5}. Similar observations are also available from Pakistan⁶.

Eventhough, fully equipped Dermatology and Venereology Departments are functioning in the four Medical Colleges of Kerala, a study on the pattern of skin disease in Kerala has not hitherto been reported. The present paper is hence, an attempt to fill up this lacuna. Detailed epidemiological and ecological aspects of each of the major diseases will be dealt with as separate papers, subsequently.

* Associate Professor, Dermatology and Venereology.

† Assistant Professor, Social and Preventive Medicine.

‡ Assistant Professor, Dermatology and Venereology, Medical College Hospital, Trivandrum.

Received for publication on 26—11—1975

Material and Methods

The data pertaining to this study were gathered from the Dermatology and Venereology Department of the Medical College Hospital, Trivandrum. This includes all the cases that attended the department both as outpatients and in-patients for a period of 5 years from 1967 to 1971. Venereal cases are not included.

Trivandrum, the capital city of Kerala lies in latitude 8.29 N. and longitude 76.59 E. with a population of 4,09,000. Even though majority of the cases reported are from Trivandrum Taluk, patients from almost all the districts

Tables and Observations

TABLE 1

Distribution of skin diseases during the 5 year period. In number and as percentage of total hospital attendance.

Year	Total attendance	Skin diseases	Percentage
1967	124639	12136	9.74
1968	130012	12235	9.41
1969	137164	16279	11.87
1970	154626	14851	9.60
1971	154435	18067	11.70
Total	700976	73588	10.50

TABLE 2A
Year distribution of skin diseases (Infectious)

Diseases	Years					Total
	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	
Fungus infection	2184	2142	3050	2887	3158	13421
Leprosy	841	583	844	718	757	3743
Pyoderma	569	942	1311	971	1679	5472
Parasitic infection	23	38	78	40	56	255
Scabies	2501	1885	1577	1732	1636	9331
Viral infection	319	347	447	493	575	2181
T. B. Skin	6	10	17	12	33	78
Total	6443	5947	7324	6853	7854	34481

TABLE 2B
Non-infectious

Allergic Eczema	2190	2120	3173	3166	4342	14991
Deficiency disease	378	379	466	805	758	2786
Pemphigus	4	10	7	7	7	35
Pigmentary disorders	545	474	839	370	767	2995
Psoriasis	240	242	416	248	369	1515
Seborrhoeic Dermatitis	487	773	1497	809	1134	4700
Collagen diseases	13	17	14	19	18	81
Lichen planus	78	82	203	140	213	715
Other dermatoses	1758	2192	2340	2434	2565	11289
Total	5693	6288	8955	7998	10173	39107

of Kerala attend this hospital. Here the literacy is high. Personal hygiene and environmental sanitation are of good standard. 75% of the patients belong to low, 20% middle and 5% high socio-economic groups.

It is seen that out of 700,976 cases, 73,588 i.e., 10.5% had skin diseases.

Table 3 gives the percentage distribution of various skin diseases. Fungus infections account for 18.24% and allergic and eczematous dermatosis for 20.37% of cases. In the latter group is included contact Dermatitis which is by and large due to the injudicious application of ayurvedic medicine and other local therapeutic agents. Even-though attendance for scabies in this hospital accounted for only 12.68% of cases the prevalence rate in the State as a whole is much higher. Viral infections (2.96%) are exclusive of

exanthematic conditions which attend the Infectious disease hospital.

TABLE 3
(Percentage distribution of skin disease)

Diseases	Percentage
Fungus infection	18.24
Leprosy	5.09
Pyoderma	7.44
Scabies	12.68
Parasitic infection	0.35
Viral infection	2.96
T. B. Skin	.10
Allergy and Eczema	20.37
Deficiency diseases	3.78
Pemphigus	0.05
Pigmentary disorders	4.09
Psoriasis	2.06
Seborrhoeic dermatitis	6.39
Collagen diseases	.10
Lichen planus	.97
Other dermatoses	15.35
Total	100.00

Acknowledgment

The authors are grateful to the Principal, Medical College, Trivandrum for permitting them to publish this paper.

REFERENCES

1. Mehta TK : Pattern of skin diseases in India, Indian J Derm Vener, 28 : 134, 1962.
2. Gass HH : Pattern of skin diseases in India, Indian J Derm Vener, 28 : 140, 1962.
3. Jayaram DP : Pattern of skin diseases in India, Indian J Derm Vener, 28 : 147, 1962.
4. Sadhana SR : Pattern of skin diseases in India, Indian J Derm Vener, 28 : 149, 1962.
5. Desai SC : Ecologic perspective of Dermatologic problems in India, Arch Derm, 82 : 701, 1960.
6. Shaikh NA : Pattern of skin diseases in Pakistan, Indian J Derm Vener, 28 : 143, 1962.

CAN YOU HELP?

February 1976 issues of the Journal sent to some of the members have been returned to the Editorial Office by the Postal Department. We shall appreciate help from the readers of this column to trace the undermentioned with their present full address :

1. M1090. Dr. S. G. Deshpand,
Mohta Building,
Rani Jhansi Sq.,
Sitabuldi, NAGPUR.
2. AP806. Dr. P. Ramana Rao,
3-6-168/6 (Upstairs),
Hyderguda, HYDERABAD-500029.
3. KT1122. Dr. Y. Sharma (Major AMC),
38, Residency Road Cross,
BANGALORE-560025.
4. KT1111. Dr. K. M. Rama Rao,
55, 3rd Main Road,
Yadavagiri,
MYSORE-570002.
5. G435. Dr. M. L. Khatri,
Near Mahamandir Crossing,
Mandore Road,
JODHPUR (RAJ).