

CLINICAL AND EPIDEMIOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF CUTANEOUS LEISHMANIASIS IN SRI LANKA

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Cutaneous Leishmaniasis (CL) caused by *Leishmania donovani* is a vector borne disease in Sri Lanka with a rising trend in prevalence. Identifying risk factors and specific clinical presentations to implement preventive strategies and early treatment is the objective of this study. A sample of 509 clinically suspected of having CL was selected consecutively from 2005 to 2015 across Sri Lanka for the study. Diagnosis was confirmed by microscopic visualization of the *Leishmania* amastigote from the slit skin smear. A structured questionnaire was used to identify the exposure related risk factors and a clinical examination was done to identify the lesion characteristics. Out of 509 clinical cases, 41.5% were smear positive. The study population ranged from ages 1 to 80 (mean = 34.46) and the most affected age group was

30-39. Of the smear positives, 58.85% were males while many were from the North Western and North Central regions of the country and exposed to scrub jungles. Sand fly exposure ($p=0.04$) and risk occupations ($p=0.04$) were significant risk factors. Signs of inflammation ($p=0.02$), lack of pruritus ($p=0.02$) and scaly lesions ($p=0.003$) were significant lesion characteristics in smear positivity. Lesions were commonly found in the face and upper limbs and were papulo-nodular in nature. Overall smear positivity among clinically suspected CL was at 41.5%. Significant risk factors for the disease were high risk occupations and sand fly exposure. Lack of pruritus, presence of scaly lesions and signs of inflammation were highly predictive lesion characteristics of CL in Sri Lanka.

Biography

Dr. Sanura Vithana completed his primary and secondary education at the prestigious Trinity College Kandy and obtained his MBBS from the University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka in 2017. He currently works in the Department of Parasitology in the same institution as a Temporary Lecturer. His academic interests are clinical medicine and surgery, tropical medicine and toxicology.

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