Treatment of cutaneous leishmaniasis recidivans with a combination of allopurinol and meglumine antimoniate: a clinical and histologic study.

Esfandiarpour I, Dabiri SH.

Source
Department of Dermatology, Afzalipour Hospital, Kerman, Iran. irajesfandiar@yahoo.com

Abstract
BACKGROUND:
Cutaneous leishmaniasis (CL) is an endemic disease in Iran, particularly in Kerman Province. Leishmaniasis recidivans (LR) is one of the characteristics of this disease with a chronic course. Most patients with LR are resistant to the usual treatments.

METHODS:
Thirty-two patients (81 females and 41 males), suffering from LR, whose disease had been demonstrated by previous direct smears or skin biopsies, were included in this study in Kerman. The duration of disease in all patients was more than 5 years, and they had all previously received various drugs for their disease. All patients were treated with a combination of oral allopurinol (mg/kg for days) and intramuscular injection of meglumine antimoniate (mg/kg for days) and were followed up for years. Skin biopsies were obtained from the skin lesions of nine cases at the beginning (baseline), during, and end of therapy. All patients were checked for complete blood count (CBC) and liver and kidney function tests on the first and last day of treatment.

RESULTS:
All patients, except two (5.78%), responded well to treatment within days. No significant side-effects were observed. The disease of two patients (Cases 42 and 82) recurred and months after treatment, respectively. Histologic examination of nine cases during and at the end of therapy showed a progression to atrophied granulomata, more lymphocytic than histiocytic infiltration, and, finally, fibrosis replacing the granulomata.

CONCLUSIONS:
From the results of this study, a combination of allopurinol plus meglumine antimoniate may be considered as a highly effectivetreatment for LR.

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