



## **LEPROSY IN THE ERA OF IMMUNOSUPPRESSION: DO WE NEED TO WORRY? EPIDEMIOLOGICAL DATA IN BRAZIL FROM 2015-2017**

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### **BACKGROUND**

Leprosy is a chronic infectious disease caused by *Mycobacterium leprae*, its main sites being the skin and peripheral nerves. Brazil is the second country in number of cases, losing only to India. Due to the high number of cases and the possibility of musculoskeletal manifestations of the disease, rheumatologists should be aware of the possibility of this diagnosis both as primary disease and in patients immunosuppressed by other rheumatic diseases or use of medications.

The objective of this study was to evaluate the number of new cases in Brazil from 2015 to 2017.

### **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

Descriptive, ecological study, in a time series, based on data obtained from the SINAN and the General Coordination of Leprosy and Diseases in Elimination (CGHDE). Data were collected on patients with leprosy in the period 2015 to 2017. Variables analyzed: new cases per state, cutaneous lesions, clinical forms and therapeutic schemes.

### **RESULTS**

In the period 2015-2017, 76.919 new cases of leprosy were reported in Brazil, with the highest number of cases occurring in the Northeast region (TABLE 1). There was a prevalence of 2-5 cutaneous lesions (TABLE 2), and the clinical form with the largest number of cases was dimorphic (TABLE 3). As for the therapeutic scheme, the most used was the MDT / MB / 12 doses (TABLE 4).

TABLE 1: New cases of leprosy by region of Brazil in the period 2015-2017

Region	New cases 2015-2017
TOTAL	76.919
North	14.817
Northeast	33.750
South	2.555
Southeast	10.322
Midwest	14.942

TABLE 2: Skin lesions of leprosy in the period 2015-2017.

SKIN LESION	NUMBER OF CASES
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TOTAL	76.919
0	3.845
1	18,185
2-5	27.529
>5 lesões	11.341
Ignored	16.019

TABLE 3: Clinical forms of leprosy in the period 2015-2017

CLINICAL FORMS NUMBER OF CASES

TOTAL	76.919
Ignored	2.932
Undetermined	10.707
Tuberculoid	11.715
Dimorph	34.899
Virchowiana	12.307
Unclassified	4.359

TABLE 4: Therapeutic schemes of leprosy in the period 2015-2017

THERAPEUTIC SCHEMES NUMBER OF CASES

TOTAL	76.919
Ignored	135
PQT 6 doses	21.877
PQT 12 doses	54.424
Other alternative schemes	483

## CONCLUSION

Brazil is an endemic country in leprosy and has presented a considerable number of new cases in three years. It is up to the rheumatologist to have a high level of suspicion for proper management and prevention of sequelae.