

## SUPERFICIAL AND CUTANEOUS FUNGAL INFECTIONS IN RENAL TRANSPLANT PATIENTS OF GUATEMALA

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**Background:** Patients undergoing renal transplants are immunocompromised and susceptible to infections. 5-14% of the transplant patients acquire fungal infections, especially during the first 3 to 6 months following the transplantation. The object of this study is to determine the agents and factors that contribute to superficial and cutaneous fungal infections following renal transplantation.

**Methodology:** 93 renal transplant patients were enrolled in the study. All patients received a renal transplant between the years of 1987 to 2000. Patients were invited to participate in the study during their post-surgery examination. After enrolling in the study, the patients were interviewed and examined for any dermatological lesions during the months of January and May of 2001. Samples were taken of any skin lesion for laboratory investigation, and clinical and epidemiological data were collected. Epidemiological data included demographical description, daily habits, and pre- and post-transplant clinical features and lab findings. The data was collected in EPI INFO 6.0 and statistical analysis was performed using univariate and bivariate analysis, through the Chi square frequency tests.

**Results:** 43% of the patients (40) had diagnosed skin lesions, 65% of which were of fungal etiology. Of those with diagnosed skin lesions, 70% of the men were found to have fungal lesions where as only 43% of the women had confirmed fungal lesions. In general, we did not observe any variable that predisposed patients to fungal infections.

**Conclusions:** The fungal agent most frequently isolated in the transplant patients was *Trichophyton rubrum*. The toenail was the major site of infection by this agent. The second most common fungal agent was *Malassezia furfur*. Although there were no statistically significant differences in any of the predictive variables, we found the prevalence of fungal infection in renal transplant patients (26%) is higher than those found in other studies.