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An outbreak investigation of scabies, Dembiya district, North Gondar Zone, Amhara Region, Ethiopia, November 2017

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Background: Scabies affects people of all countries. In developing countries, children, in particular, are most susceptible, with an average prevalence of 5–10%. It is very common in Ethiopia, especially during natural or manmade disasters, such as flooding, drought, civil war and conflict, poor water supply and sanitation and overcrowded living condition.

Methods and materials: We conducted 1:2 unmatched case-control study from August 28-November 2, 2017 in Dembiya district, North Gondar Zone, Amhara Region. 40 cases and 80 controls were randomly selected from the community. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire. The analysis was made using Epi Info and SPSS software. Odds Ratio, 95%CI and p-value were used to measure the significance of association in the bivariate and multivariate analysis. Variables with a p-value of equal to or less than 0.05 were reported to be significantly associated with the dependent variable.

Results: We identified 141 scabies cases with an overall attack rate of 2% and zero case fatality rate. Of reported cases 55% of them were male and the median age of the affected population was 16yrs (IQR= 19yrs). Sex (AOR:0.4, 95%CI:0.1-0.7), Handwashing with soap (AOR:0.6, 95%CI:0.1-0.6), Body bath more than a week (AOR:1.5, 95%CI:1.2-4.1), Cloth exchange with infected person (AOR:3.1, 95%CI:2.0-4.0), contact history (AOR:17.0, 95%CI:13.4-20.0) and water shortage (AOR:3.3, 95%CI:2.4-4.5) were significantly associated with scabies.

Conclusion: We found poor hygienic practices, sharing of clothing materials, sleeping with people that had contracted scabies was associated with higher frequency of scabies disease. Therefore, increasing awareness creation about the transmission, prevention and control methods of scabies disease is recommended.

Biography

Girma Birhanu Nurie holds a Master of Public Health in Epidemiology from Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia. He did his BSc in Environmental Health at the University of Gondar and Diploma in Environmental Health at Jimma University, all in Ethiopia. Currently, he is working as Field Epidemiologist, Researcher Disease Prevention and Control Officer at Addis Ababa Regional Health Bureau, Department of Public Health Emergency Management/Bole Sub City Health Office. His passion is taking preventive medicine closer to the rural populations in Ethiopia. He is a former basketball player. He enjoys community work/volunteering and is a member of the Ethiopian Public Health Association.

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