



Neglected Tropical Diseases: A Global Surge

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DESCRIPTION

The Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTD) is considered as the most debilitating among the common chronic infections of the world's poorest population. It represents a group of chronic parasitic and bacterial infections such as hookworm infection, ascariasis, schistosomiasis, lymphatic filariasis, onchocerciasis, chaga's disease, leishmaniasis, and trachoma. It also includes selected viral, especially arboviral, fungal and ectoparasitic infestations. Nematodes are abundant and diverse in terms of biology and ecology. In large part, helminthiasis are caused by members of the phyla nematoda and platyhelminthes. Species belonging to both phyla occupy numerous niches within their mammalian hosts, ranging from intestinal lumen to intravascular and even intracellular sites. Parasitic species of nematoda are the main causative agents of NTDs, which afflict around 2.7 billion people. Human evolution and parasitic evolution have run hand in hand and has resulted in an amazing number of parasites; about 300 species of helminth worms and more than 70 species of protozoa. Parasitic nematodes infect nearly half the world's human population, resulting in significant morbidity and mortality. Their presence is known for more than a century, and they continue to have a devastating influence on less privileged populations throughout the tropical and subtropical regions of the world. Helminth parasitic diseases, *viz.*, filariasis, ascariasis and hookworm infections, contribute significantly to the problem.

The prominence of neglected tropical diseases has been underrated since many are asymptomatic and have long incubation periods. The link between a death and a neglected tropical disease that has been latent for a long period of time is not often realized. Areas of high endemicity are often in geographically insulated areas, making treatment and prevention much more difficult.

These diseases have been snubbed because they mainly affect the poorest countries of the developing world and because of recent emphasis on falling prevalence of HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria. Far more resources are given to the "big three" diseases (HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria) because of their higher mortality and public awareness rates. Neglected tropical diseases do not have a noticeable cultural figure to champion the cause within developed countries; neglected tropical diseases affect the very poorest in society. In the United States, there are up to 1.46 million families, comprising 2.8 million children, living on less than two dollars a day. In developed countries, the burdens of neglected tropical diseases are often outshined by other public health issues. However, many of the same issues put populations at risk in developed as well as in developing nations. For example, other problems can stem from poverty which exposes individuals to the vectors of these diseases, such as dearth of adequate housing.

CONCLUSION

Twenty neglected tropical diseases are listed by the World Health Organization (WHO), though other organizations define NTDs differently. Chromoblastomycosis and other deep mycoses, scabies and other ectoparasites and snakebite envenomation were additional to the list in 2017. These diseases are common in 149 countries, distressing more than 1.4 billion people (including more than 500 million children) and costing developing economies billions of dollars every year. They ensued in 142,000 deaths in 2013-down from 204,000 deaths in 1990. Of these 20, two were beset for eradication of Dracunculiasis (guinea-worm disease) by 2015 and yaws by 2020, and four for abolition (blinding trachoma, human African trypanosomiasis, leprosy, and lymphatic filariasis) by 2020.

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