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Evaluation of the Visual Function of Patients in Treatment for Hanseníase

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Leprosy is a long-term infectious and contagious dermatoneurological disease whose etiologic agent is *Mycobacterium leprae* and manifests itself in the skin and peripheral nerves. This pathology can trigger serious eye complications by altering visual functional performance, impairing visual acuity through retinal lesions triggering blindness. **Objective:** of this study was to evaluate visual psychophysical performance in leprosy patients with normal or near normal visual acuity. **Methodology:** The Farnsworth - Munsell 100 Hue multi - paucibacillary test of thirty - one patients with leprosy (59 eyes), 19 men and 40 women, with a mean age of 31.28 ± 10 , 2 years of age, were compared to the control group composed of twenty-eight participants (56 eyes), 20 men and 36 women, with a mean age of 46.29 ± 11.81 . Patient data were compared with the confidence interval and tolerance established by the controls. The Agostino-Pearson test and one-way ANOVA were applied in the statistical analyzes. **Results and Discussion:** Showed that there was statistical difference in Farnsworth - Munsell test between patients and controls. Patients presented higher number of errors than controls ($p < 0.01$). For the sensitivity to spatial contrast of luminance, a spatial frequency difference of 0.5 cpx was found between patients and controls. There was no correlation between the therapeutic dosage of the drug and the psychosomatic performances. There was no difference between the psychophysical performance of pauci and multibacillary patients. The conclusion of this study showed that patients with leprosy present a compromised color vision and sensitivity to normal contrast when compared to controls. Further studies may be needed to quantify the specific color vision loss of patients with leprosy.

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