

. Trans R Soc Trop Med Hyg. 1992 Jul-Aug;86(4):381-7.

A new rural focus of cutaneous leishmaniasis caused by *Leishmania tropica* in Kenya.

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We have identified a new rural focus of cutaneous leishmaniasis caused by *Leishmania tropica* in Muruku sublocation, Salama location, Laikipia district, Rift Valley province, Kenya. Based on a few available case histories, previous reports of *L. tropica* in Kenya indicated a tentative geographical distribution. Recently 6 indigenous Kenyans from the new focus, who had never travelled outside Kenya, developed cutaneous lesions on the face and/or extremities found to contain *Leishmania* by culture and smear. Most of the patients manifested the typical 'urban' dry sore which grew slowly into a nodule measuring 2 x 1 cm to 9.5 x 3 cm, and after some months formed a central crust surrounded by small satellite papules. After treatment with Pentostam (sodium stibogluconate), about 40% of the sores failed to heal completely, either scarring centrally with fulminating papules at the edges and spreading peripherally, or healing but then recrudescing at the edge of the scar. Stationary-phase promastigotes from culture isolates were analysed by cellulose acetate electrophoresis. Isoenzyme profiles of 6 isolates were compared with those of World Health Organization reference

strains using 12 enzyme loci; they were indistinguishable from those of 2 L. tropica reference strains. All 6 case sites lay within a radius of 4 km. Several other suspected cases from the same area are being investigated.

PMID: 1332221 [PubMed - indexed for MEDLINE]