

IMMUNOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF LEPROMIN TESTING

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The Mitsuda reaction has been suggested to be, possibly, a "vaccination" response.¹ Repeated Lepromin testing of "negative" individuals was shown to lead to an increasing incidence of "positivity" in the latter.²

We report a study in two Sri Lankan populations, where we carried out repeated Lepromin testing using Lepromin A with 3×10^7 bacilli/ml. At Nuwara Eliya, subjects showing Mitsuda reactions of 6 mm or less, were retested once and at Pussellawa, retested twice. With all tests, both Fernandez and Mitsuda reactions were read.

With the first retest, in both areas, there appeared to be "tolerisation" with many of the larger reactions becoming zero reactions. However at Pussellawa, with the third test, there was evidence that "tolerisation" was waning off with smaller reactions reappearing. Further, the morphological type of the reaction, in some seemed to have altered with soft, plaque-like reactions appearing, instead of well-defined nodules, typical of Mitsuda reactions.

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References

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2. Convit, J. (1978), Report, Fourth Meeting, Scientific Working Group on the Immunology of Leprosy. Geneva: WHO (WHO document T.D.R./IMMLEP-S.W.G./78), p. 9.