

## A Family with Histoid Leprosy

TO THE EDITOR:

We recently saw a family in which eight members were suffering from histoid leprosy and two had borderline tuberculoid (BT) leprosy. The occurrence of leprosy in several members of a family is not uncommon, but involvement of many members with the same type of leprosy is not usual. Moreover in this family three generations of the same family were involved. This incited us to bring this family to the attention of our colleagues working in the field of leprosy who might encounter similar cases.

The index case, a 75-year-old male, was a known case of histoid leprosy registered with our clinic at Benghazi, Libya. He had 7 sons and 5 daughters; 1 son (37 years old) and 1 daughter (age 35) had histoid leprosy. They both came voluntarily to the clinic because of their skin lesions. The son's wife was also found to have histoid leprosy, hav-

ing been discovered on active clinical examination of the family contacts. A positive history of consanguinity was found between them, she being his first cousin's sister. The couple had 8 sons and 2 daughters; 2 sons aged 14 years and 9 years, respectively, were found to have histoid leprosy. On examination of the wife's other family contacts, one of her uncles (40 years old) was found to have histoid leprosy.

The daughter of the index case had 5 sons and 3 daughters; 1 son (age 14) had histoid leprosy, 2 daughters (18 and 10 years old, respectively) were found to have BT leprosy. The clinical findings were confirmed by histopathology.

The description of this family supports the view that heredity plays an important role in the transmission of leprosy. Occurrence of the same type of leprosy in many members of the same family leads one to

speculate that genetics is playing a significant role in the determination of the development of a particular type of leprosy in a person.

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