

FIRST NINE CASES OF *MYCOBACTERIUM LENTIFLAVUM* DETECTION IN GREECE

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Purpose: To describe the first isolations of *Mycobacterium lentiflavum* from clinical specimens in Greece

Materials: Over a 3-year period (2003-2005), nine mycobacterial isolates from different patients were identified as *M. lentiflavum* with the use of GenoType Mycobacterium CM and AS assays (Hain Lifescience, Germany) at the "Agios Georgios" General Hospital of Chania (Chania, Greece). The medical files of the nine patients were reviewed and the susceptibilities to an extended panel of anti-mycobacterial drugs were determined with the proportions method using Lowenstein-Jensen slants incorporating the relevant antibiotics (bioMerieux, France and Liofilchem, Italy).

Results. Six strains were isolated from sputum or bronchoalveolar lavage and three from urine. All patients were of Greek nationality. Six of them were male. The ages ranged from 23-74 (mean 59.4) years. One patient suffered from tuberculous pleuritis, another of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and two of lung cancer. Two patients with urine isolates suffered from bladder cancer. All nine isolates were resistant to isoniazid (1 µg/ml), rifampicin (40 µg/ml), ethambutol (3 µg/ml), pyrazinamide (200 µg/ml), streptomycin (10 µg/ml), para-aminosalicylic acid (1 µg/ml), capreomycin (10 µg/ml), pefloxacin (2 µg/ml), ethionamide (10 µg/ml), amikacin (5 µg/ml) and nicotinamide (10 µg/ml), whereas they were susceptible to kanamycin (10 µg/ml), pyruvate 0.2%, rifabutine (10 µg/ml), cycloserine (30 µg/ml), rifapentin (9 µg/ml) and ofloxacin (5 µg/ml).

Conclusion. To our knowledge these are the first cases of *M. lentiflavum* isolation in Greece. *M. lentiflavum* is a scotochromogenic slow grower. As shown and in our study, *M. lentiflavum* is resistant to the majority of anti-mycobacterial drugs. Since its first description in 1996, there have only been a few reports of clinical disease. In our cases, diagnosis of true infection was either not pursued or the patients died shortly after isolation. Urine is a very rare site of *M. lentiflavum* isolation.