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Editor's Choice

This issue of *Leprosy Review* demonstrates the breadth of interest in leprosy with articles ranging from health education programmes in Tanzania (p. 57) to detailed studies of retroviral infection and leprosy on rhesus monkeys (p. 6). We also continue the debate on the use of Rifampicin/Ofloxacin/Minocycline (ROM) treatment for single-lesion leprosy. Dr Katoch has contributed an editorial highlighting some of the microbiological problems of treating mycobacterial disease with single-dose therapy. Killing all the organisms with a single dose of antibiotics may be impossible when some mycobacteria are in a resting or dormant phase. In the Letters section Dr Ramu (p. 78) offers further comments on both the ROM trial and the management of single-lesion cases.

Various studies of leprosy vaccines, most recently the Malawi trial, have shown that BCG vaccination protects against leprosy but we still do not understand how this protection is conferred and why it cannot be enhanced by adding *Mycobacterium leprae* to the vaccine. Gormus *et al.* (p. 6) report on the genetic component of this effect by looking at the protection afforded by BCG and *M. leprae* vaccination in two monkey species with differing susceptibilities to leprosy. Rhesus monkeys are susceptible to paucibacillary disease and were protected by BCG vaccination and this protection was slightly enhanced by addition of *M. leprae* but in Sooty Mangabey Monkeys BCG vaccination only slowed the development of multibacillary disease. These results suggest an important genetic component for the protection afforded by BCG vaccination and emphasize the need to have BCG protection studies done in different regions where the populations may have different disease susceptibilities.

A clinical series from Vellore reports on patients with renal transplantation and leprosy. Even in this small series these immunosuppressed patients responded well to conventional multidrug therapy.

The latest report from Zimbabwe suggests that although only small numbers of patients are being diagnosed there transmission is continuing. A worrying feature of this report is that 33% of patients had visible deformities at the time of diagnosis.

Thank you to all those people who responded to the questionnaire about the poster series. We felt very encouraged by your replies and will be continuing the poster series but in alternate issues of the Journal. Please keep us posted with your suggestions and comments.

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