STUDIES IN MEDICAL MYCOLOGY

II. CANDIDIASIS OF SCALP

by

S. K. SHOME

Department of Botany, Lucknow University, India.

Introduction

Candidiasis is a fungus disease caused by *Candida albicans* which may produce lesions in mouth, skin, nail, vagina, lungs, bronchi and occasionally cause meningitis, endocarditis or septicemia. The infection has been found to be of a localised as well as generalised nature in relation to the human body. Although it has been stated to infect all parts of the body (Moss & McQuown 1953), so far as the author is aware, in the available literature no instance or case of Candidiasis of human scalp has been reported. The present paper deals with a case of Candidiasis of scalp found by the author during the course of collection of dermatophytes from the Skin Department (outdoor) of King George’s Medical College, Lucknow.

Symptoms

The infected scalp showed sharply demarcated raised lesions somewhat similar to the typical patches of thrush with a little whitish liquid oozing out from them. The patches were covered by a thick creamy white layer which on removal revealed a bright red moist base. The lesions were oval to rounded in shape rimmed with small pustules. These were many and of varied size, a few of them coalesced together to form larger ones. Lesions caused pain and loss of hair in the affected part. The clinical picture appeared similar to that of Dermatophytosis except that exudation was more free and the lesions in general more moist.

Material

The material was collected from the lesion on the scalp of a patient, diagnosed by the Dermatologist (Dr. R. N. GUPTA) as a case of Candidiasis, by using usual technique.

The infected part was thoroughly swabbed with rectified spirit and scrapings were taken by means of a sterilized scalpel. These were stored in sterilized tubes for subsequent investigation. A portion of the scraping was directly examined under microscope to study the nature of fungal elements and another portion cultured on Sabouraud’s glucose agar. Bacterial contamination was checked by adding penicillin (20 units per ml.) and Streptomycin (40 units...
Fig. 1. Part of the infected scalp.  

Fig. 2. Colony, 15 days, Sabouraud's glucose agar.

Fig. 3. Numerous large thick walled chlamydospores. Corn Meal Agar × 560.

per ml.) in the medium. The inoculated tubes were incubated at 37° C. from which pure monosporal cultures were obtained and stored as stock culture for further experiments.

Pathogen

A small amount of scraping of the diseased tissue was mounted on a slide in a drop in 10 % KOH solution with a cover-slip added and the preparation gently heated over the flame for clearing. This on examination revealed small, budding, oval, thin-walled yeast like cells with bits of hyphae also. The cells were approximately 3—4 μ in size. This along with the clinical diagnosis gave the indication as its being one of the species of Candida.