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POSTER

CLINICAL LEISHMANIASIS

LEISHMAN: A EUROPEAN CONSORTIUM FOR THE HARMONISATION OF DIAGNOSIS, PARASITE TYPING AND TREATMENT OF PATIENTS WITH LEISHMANIASIS

GERT VAN DER AUWERA¹; PIERRE BUFFET²; MARK BAILEY³; ALDERT BART⁴; INGRID FELGER⁵; JOHANNES BLUM⁶.
1.INSTITUTE OF TROPICAL MEDICINE, ANTWERP - BELGIUM ; 2.UMR945 IMMUNITY & INFECTION INSERM UPMC AND DEPARTMENT OF PARASITOLOGY, PITIÉ-SALPÊTRIÈRE HOSPITAL, PARIS - FRANCE ; 3.BIRMINGHAM HEARTLANDS HOSPITAL & ROYAL CENTRE FOR DEFENCE MEDICINE, BIRMINGHAM - UNITED KINGDOM ; 4.CENTRE FOR INFECTION AND IMMUNITY AMSTERDAM, ACADEMIC MEDICAL CENTRE, AMSTERDAM - NETHERLANDS ; 5,6.SWISS TROPICAL AND PUBLIC HEALTH INSTITUTE, BASEL - SWITZERLAND .

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Summary

Except in the Southern Mediterranean area, human infection with *Leishmania* is uncommon in Europe. Typically infections occur during tourism or military activities, or when European citizens visit relatives and friends in endemic regions. As a result, relatively few cases are seen even in tertiary reference centres, the incidence being too small in each country to perform appropriately powered trials of antileishmanial treatment regimens. Moreover, patients from non-endemic regions may react differently to a certain infection or treatment as compared to patients who are frequently exposed to the parasite. Therefore compiling robust diagnostic and therapeutic data directly from patients attending European travel and military clinics is the only means to generate sufficient medically relevant information to support recommendations for the management of European patients with leishmaniasis. In addition, when travellers have visited several endemic areas, accurate determination of the infecting *Leishmania* species requires a globally applicable species typing approach to allow a more accurate prognosis and guiding therapeutic decisions.

A European consortium was established to build a joint database of clinical and diagnostic data and to collect biological reference material. This network is called **LeishMan**, short for **Leishmaniasis Management**, and currently consists of 31 members from 21 institutes in Belgium, France, Germany, The Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, and the UK. LeishMan aims at standardising procedures for diagnosis and parasite typing, and harmonising treatment guidelines. The LeishMan database permits systematic observation of cases from 2012 onwards. The research priority is on imported cutaneous leishmaniasis, but the database will cover all clinical leishmaniasis cases seen at the partner institutes. The consortium is currently seeking active participation of additional European countries, both where *Leishmania* is endemic and others. In the future, extension to non-European countries will be considered. Further information can be found on leishman.tropnet.eu.