

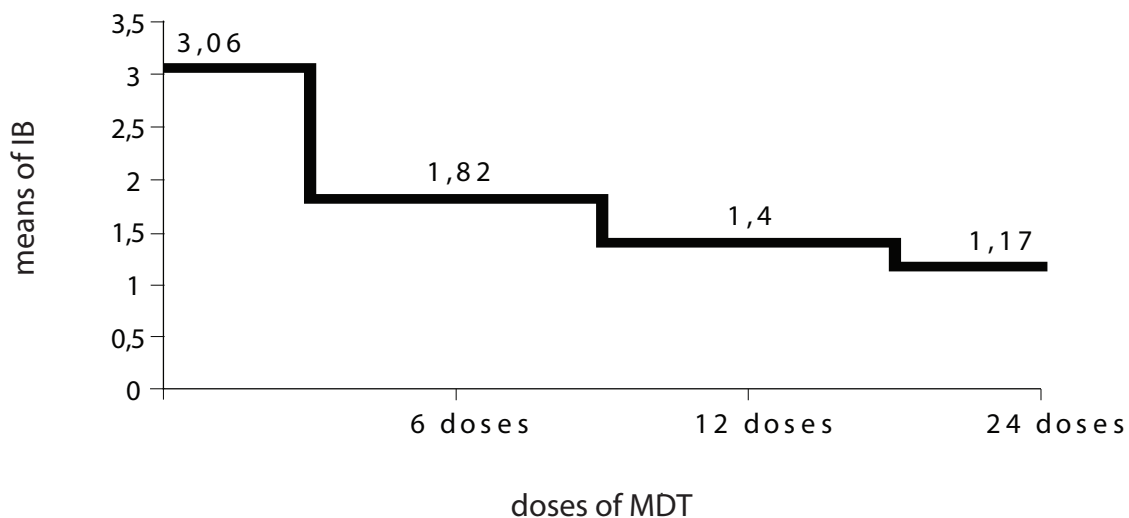
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LETTER TO EDITOR

Mr Editor,

No difference is found when comparing bacterial indexes (BIs) at 6th dose and 12th dose or 12th dose and 24 th dose.

Data of BIs from 108 multibacillary new leprosy cases, from the out-patient unit of the Sanitary Dermatology Institute (former Curupaiti State Hospital), from September 1983 to December 1987, were measured on a six-month basis for two years. Measurements were taken by the same technician throughout the process (collection of slit-skin smears, fixation and staining of slides and count of bacilli). All the laboratory procedures followed the recommendations of the Ministry of Health, Brazil. We compared the means of the maximum BIs values before multidrug treatment (MDT), at the 6 th, 12 th and 24th monthly doses. The F statistic was utilized to compare BIs means. Figure 1 shows the decrease of BI during treatment. The maximum BI reduction occurs during the first 6 months of treatment. A significant difference ($p < 0,05$) was demonstrated between the BI at the beginning of treatment and at the 6th dose of treatment. F statistic demonstrated no significant difference when comparing BI at 6th dose and 12th dose and 12th dose to 24th dose.



source:HECU/SES RJ

Figure 1. Evolution of mean maximum value of bacterial index in leprosy patients on multidrug treatment, Brazil 1987.

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Table 1. Evolution of the means of bacterial index and maximum value of skin smears in leprosy patients on multidrug treatment (WHO) regimens.

	Means & SD of Bls	Mean & SD of maximum value of Bls
Start of MDT treatment (n=108)	2,06 ± 0,31	3,06 ± 0,37
6 th doses (n=107)	1,27 ± 0,25	1,82 ± 0,31
12 th doses (n=108)	0,99 ± 0,24	1,40 ± 0,27
24 th doses (n=108)	0,85 ± 0,22	1,17 ± 0,25

Data from HECU/SESJR (1987)

Table 2. Difference between the mean bacterial index and maximum values of skin smears in leprosy patients on multidrug treatment (WHO) regimens.

	Difference between means of Bls	Difference between means of maximum value of Bls
Start of MDT & 6 th dose	0,79	1,79
6 th dose & 12 th dose	0,28	0,42
12 th dose & 2 th dose	0,14	0,23

Data from HECU/SESJR (1987)

Table 3. Mean of maximum bacterial indexes values within comparisons.

COMPARATIVE MEANS	F Statistic	P value
Start of MDT treatment & 6 th dose	20,02	0,000012
6 th dose & 12 th dose	2,53	0,113393
12 th dose & 24 th dose	1,32	0,251315

Data from HECU/SESJR (1987)

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- 2 Marques AB, Andrade VLG de, Vianna FR, Avelleira JCR. Estudo do Ib em pacientes de hanseníase multibacilares durante o tratamento com PQT-OMS. *Anais Brasileiro de Dermatologia* 1993; 59(1):191-93.