

Introduction:

- Scabies mites (*Sarcoptes scabiei* var. *hominis*) burrow into skin and deposit eggs, causing intense pruritis. In resource-poor tropical settings, the sheer burden of scabies infestation, as well as their complications, imposes a major cost on health-care systems.¹
- There is no prior research on the burden that scabies poses on the community of Shirati, Tanzania.
- **Aim:** to identify the prevalence of disease and potential gaps in the care management of dermatologic infectious conditions while gathering epidemiological data that could help identify targets for interventions in Shirati.

Methods:

- **Study type:** Cross Sectional Observational Pilot Study
- **Study Population:** Patient population at Shirati KMT hospital as well as volunteers from the general community of Shirati village at the weekly market.
- **Data collection:** Survey (see next section) translated in Swahili and observational notes from shadowing clinician encounters.



Skin Disease Survey:

General:

1. Age: _____
2. Sex: _____
3. Occupation: _____
4. Religion: _____
5. Education: _____
6. Village: _____

Skin:

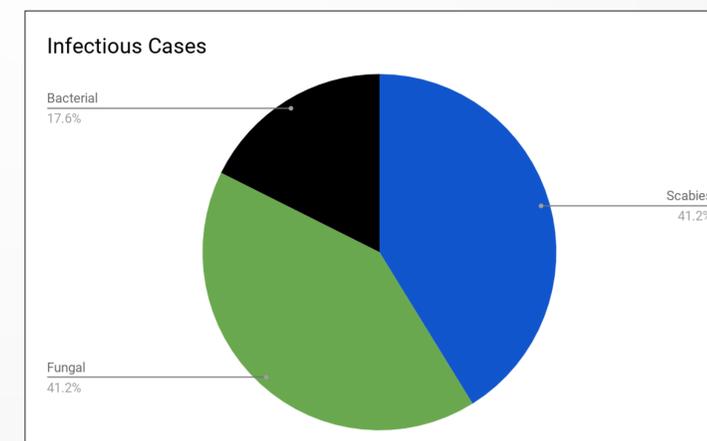
1. Have you been diagnosed with a skin disease?
Please Circle: yes no
2. Do you currently have the skin condition (rash, bumps, redness, etc)?
Please Circle: yes no
a. If yes, what? _____
3. Do you think the skin condition is an issue?
Please Circle: yes no
4. Have you used medication for your condition?
Please Circle: yes no
If yes, please state whether it was prescribed, a home remedy, or other _____
5. Do you prefer traditional/local remedies or modern healthcare?²
Please Circle: traditional modern
6. What are some barriers to receiving health care for a skin condition? (ex: location, cost, etc)



Results:

- There were 17 cases of infectious and 5 cases of noninfectious dermatological conditions (n=17).
- Prevalence of scabies was 41.2% (n=7), with the majority presenting between ages of 18-30 years old.
 - There was no statistical significance between genders or age groups.
- “Unclean,” and “dirty” are words subjects reported being reactions to their condition.
- Out of the 10 patients that responded to the question, all preferred modern (hospital) care over local remedies.
- 60% participants reported they received medication to treat their skin condition.
 - 57.1% of participants with scabies reported receiving medication for treatment.
- Observed Limitations: patients were not educated on their condition, did not follow up, and could not recall prescribed medication.

Figure 1:



Discussion:

- Of the subjects seen, more than half received medication but were still experiencing the symptoms of the disease.
- Three of the participants who presented with scabies reported sharing clothes with each other, having no prior knowledge of how the disease spreads.
 - Suggests a gap in care management
- Noted a voiced stigma towards the patients presenting with scabies, potentially hindering patients from seeking medical care.

Conclusion:

- This pilot study suggests that scabies poses a burden of disease in Shirati.
- Future studies should focus on improving patient education on the prevention and care of scabies during the clinical visit and community outreach to combat the stigma of contracting scabies.

References

1. “Scabies.” World Health Organization, World Health Organization, 6 Nov. 2015, www.who.int/lymphatic_filariasis/epidemiology/scabies/en/
2. Baylor, Jessica, "Analysis of Traditional Medicine in Zanzibar, Tanzania" (2015). Independent Study Project (ISP) Collection. 2050. https://digitalcollections.sit.edu/isp_collection/2050

Acknowledgements

The Authors would like to thank Anne Lee RD, CDE (MOBEC), Dorothy Kawira (Palliative Care Department, Shirati KMT Hospital)