

## Letters

### Reporting in the clinical trials evaluating scabies treatments

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Dear Editor,

With great interest, we read the following five publications in the *Annals of Parasitology* [1–5] reporting clinical trials evaluating scabies treatments. We would like to invite the authors to provide the readership with information on the following issue: It is quite astonishing that in four of five publications [1–4] the reported numbers of patients are often multiples of ten. These are the numbers of patients eligible/enrolled/lost to follow-up, the number of patients per subgroup of disease severity, as well as the number of patients cured 2 and/or 4 weeks post-treatment. Furthermore, there are inconsistencies within each publication (Table 1).

Table 1. Study characteristics and results

Author year country	Intervention	Subjects	Definition of cure	Disease severity at baseline	Result week 2: cure	Result week 4: cure	Remarks
Alipour 2015 [1] Iran	ivermectin oral 0.2mg/kg single dose	210	Cure = absence of new lesions and healing of old lesions	mild: 30 moderate: 60 severe: 120	130/210 retreated 80	35/80	Inconsistency with number of enrolled subjects: <b>„None of the 400 participants experienced allergic reactions”</b> (p.81)
	sulfur 10% ointment, 3 consecutive days (patient-applied)	210		mild: 35 moderate: 55 severe: 130	95/210 retreated 115	30/115	
Pourhasan 2013 [4] Iran	permethrin 5% cream	175	Cure = absence of new lesions and healing of all old lesions, regardless of the presence of postscabetic nodules	mild: 25 moderate: 60 severe: 90	140/175 <b>70 % (should be 80%)</b>	30/60 <b>retreated should be 35 not 60</b>	<b>„...450 patients were initially enrolled. Of these, 50 patients were not able to return after the first follow-up examination, and were therefore excluded from the study. The remaining 350 patients”..(p.144)</b> <b>Inconsistency with number of enrolled subjects: - overall cure rates were reported based on 400 patients</b> <b>„None of the 360 patients experienced allergic reactions”</b> (p. 145) _
	crotamiton 10% cream	175		mild: 35 moderate: 30 severe: 110	90/175 <b>45% (should be 51%)</b>	40/110 <b>retreated sholud be 85 not 110</b>	
Goldust 2013 [3] Iran	permethrin 2.5% cream	220	Cure = absence of new lesions and healing of all old lesions, regardless of the presence of postscabetic nodules	mild: 30 moderate: 80 severe: 110	140/220 retreated 80	50/80	<b>overall cure rate for Tenutex group reported based on 200 patients</b>
	Tenutex emulsion	220		mild: 40 moderate: 50 severe: 130	100/220 retreated 120	30/120	
Ranjesh 2013 [5] Iran	permethrin 5% <b>lotion/cream?</b>	30	Cure = absence of new lesions and healing of all old lesions, regardless of the presence of postscabetic nodules.”; <b>paper also states „demonstrated symptomatic improvement”?</b>	mild: 4 moderate: 8 severe: 18	28/30 retreated 2	2/2	...group A were to receive ivermectin, and group B were to receive <b>sulfur 10% oinment... (p.190)</b>
	ivermectin oral 0.2mg/kg	30		mild: 6 moderate: 7 severe: 17	22/30 retreated 8	6/8	
Goldust 2013 [2] Iran	permethrin 2.5% cream	190	Cure = absence of new lesions and healing of all old lesions, regardless of presence of postscabetic nodules	mild: 30 moderate: 50 severe: 110	125/190	45/65	Inconsistency with number of enrolled subjects: <b>„None of the 400 participants experienced allergic reactions.”</b> (p.81)
	ivermectin 1% solution 0.4mg/kg	190		mild: 40 moderate: 50 severe: 100	120/190	40/70	

**underlined** – inconsistencies in publications

- [1] Alipour H., Goldust M. 2015. The efficacy of oral ivermectin vs. sulfur 10% ointment for the treatment of scabies. *Annals of Parasitology* 61:79-84.
- [2] Goldust M., Rezaee E., Raghifar R., Hemayat S. 2013a. Treatment of scabies: the topical ivermectin vs. permethrin 2.5% cream. *Annals of Parasitology* 59:79-84.
- [3] Goldust M., Rezaee E., Raghifar R., Naghavi-Behzad M. 2013b. Comparison of permethrin 2.5 % cream vs. Tenutex emulsion for the treatment of scabies. *Annals of Parasitology* 59:31-35.
- [4] Pourhasan A., Goldust M., Rezaee E. 2013. Treatment of scabies, permethrin 5% cream vs. crotamiton 10% cream. *Annals of Parasitology* 59:143-147.
- [5] Ranjkesh M.R., Naghili B., Goldust M., Rezaee E. 2013. The efficacy of permethrin 5% vs. oral ivermectin for the treatment of scabies. *Annals of Parasitology* 59:189-194.