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Title: MOTT as a cause of treatment failure in pulmonary tuberculosis

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Body: Tuberculosis has been & continues to be one of the most significant pathogens in term of human morbidity & mortality. Mycobacteria other than tuberculosis represents a significant proportion of mycobacterial infections, in both immunocompetent and immunocompromised hosts, however MOTT patients are initially treated with conventional antituberculous treatments, before the results of culture to identify the bacteria as non tuberculous are available, resulting in a period of time in which patients are treated with drugs to which the bacteria are frequently resistant. The reappearance of positive smear at the end of treatment may be due to relapse of tuberculosis or disease by non tuberculous mycobacteria (MOTT). The aim of the study is to evaluate the possible role of MOTT in treatment failure cases of pulmonary TB. The study includes 50 patients with treatment failure on basis of persistent positive sputum culture for more than 5 months. Sputum examination by ZN stain, culture of mycobacterial tuberculosis using BACTEC TB system followed by BACTEC NAP TB test on positive BACTEC culture to distinguish between TB complex and MOTT, out of the 50 patients who proved to have persistent positive culture for mycobacteria, 39 patients (78%) had pulmonary infection with mycobacterium complex whereas 11 patients (22%) had pulmonary infection with MOTT. In conclusion early diagnosis and screening of other mycobacteria is required for the appropriate management. Considering MOTT as a possible cause early in the course of the disease, especially in certain high risk group will allow successful treatment to take place and avoid failure in treatment.