



## The relationship between leprosy and low socioeconomic conditions

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**INTRODUCTION:** Leprosy is a slowly evolving infectious disease whose etiological agent is *Mycobacterium Leprae*. Currently, it is known that the main contamination route of this pathology is respiratory, through the elimination of Hansen's bacillus in nasal secretions, coughing and sneezing. Leprosy is a chronic disease that affects mainly the less developed socioeconomic regions around the world. Given this scenario, it is essential to analyze the relationship between leprosy and the social and economic circumstances that favor this condition, highlighting the main barriers that affect the treatment and prevention of the disease in these areas. **METHODOLOGY:** A literature review was carried out in the SCiELO database, using the terms "leprosy", "socioeconomic conditions" and "infectious diseases", using the Boolean operator AND. Articles related to the theme were selected. **RESULTS:** It was found that leprosy has a high prevalence among the less educated population and in areas with poor socioeconomic conditions. These factors result from the lack of educational measures on the subject in the less favored population, which leads to a lack of knowledge about the disease and its forms of prevention. Thus, poverty, lack of education, and social exclusion contribute to the increase in the number of leprosy cases worldwide. It is also important to highlight that the difficulty in accessing health services hinders the treatment and cure of the disease, which occurs due to the lack of financial resources and the geographical distance between treatment centers. Moreover, in low-income environments, houses are often shared by several people, which enables the transmission of the bacillus that causes the disease, resulting in a high number of infected individuals. Initiatives to prevent and treat leprosy in areas with these unfavorable conditions include the development of public health programs aimed at increasing awareness of the disease, improving access to health services, and ensuring that patients receive appropriate treatment and the necessary emotional support, as lack of appropriate treatment and social discrimination can cause emotional and psychological damage to patients. **CONCLUSION:** Therefore, the clear relationship between leprosy and unfavorable socioeconomic conditions of the population is verified. It is worth mentioning that poverty and misinformation, as well as the limited access to health services are factors of great relevance for the transmission and worsening of the disease. It is inferred, therefore, that it is essential to build effective government programs directed to the eradication of leprosy.



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