

November 08-09, 2018  
London, UKJ Eye Cataract Surg 2018, Volume 4  
DOI: 10.21767/2471-8300-C3-009

# Affordable quality eye care in leprosy: A study over two decades

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**Introduction:** Leprosy continues to be a challenge to health worldwide, with about 250 000 new cases being detected every year. People affected with leprosy (PAL) stay away from the stigma in the outskirts of the cities and till denied access to the general healthcare system. More than two decades, we started taking care of them.

**Aim:** To analyze the outcome of interventions adopted in PALs in a prospective case control study.

**Methods:** PALs undergoing cataract surgery were included and matched controls were taken from non-leprosy population undergoing surgery in camps.

**Results:** All cases were grouped under 3 categories: Group1 included leprosy cases during 1996 to 2000 (Total 160). Vision

improved to 6/12 in 120 cases. 160 controls were taken from non-leprosy cataract surgery camps. Group 2:2005-2009: Out of 250 cases 210 had more than 6/12. Group 3:2010 to 2014: Small incision cataract surgery with IOL was done in 242 cases. Vision in 235 cases is > 6/12. Results were similar in both PALs and non-leprosy controls.

**Conclusion:** Cataract in leprosy is a mixed problem: socio-economic ocular. Quality treatment should include all-round care using different section of people from government and NGOs. Early diagnosis and regular periodic check is most important. All programmes should include care of children. More than a lakh new cases/year is huge burden which can be tackled with locally available resources.

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