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Prevalence of *Candida* species in urinary tract infections among hospitalized patients in medical wards at Teaching Hospital, Jaffna

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Introduction: Urinary tract infections (UTIs) are common, but *Candida* species are increasingly identified among hospitalized patients with risk factors such as prolonged stay, antibiotic use, catheterization, and immunosuppression. Antifungal resistance in *Candida* species has complicated patient management. A limited number of studies have been conducted in Sri Lanka related to this study.

Objectives: This study determines the prevalence of *Candida* species causing UTIs among patients admitted to the Medical wards of the Teaching Hospital, Jaffna.

Methodology: A descriptive, cross-sectional study was conducted among 271 patients suspected of UTIs. Based on a convenient sampling technique, participants were selected. Mid-stream urine and catheterized urine samples were processed in the Microbiology Laboratory. Data were analyzed by using SPSS version 20 by chi-square tests ($p < 0.05$).

Results: The results revealed a prevalence of 12.2%. Out of 271 participants, 33 (12.2%) were positive for *Candida* species. *Candida albicans* (48.5%) is the most predominant species, which is consistent with other studies. Followed by *Candida glabrata* (24.2%), *Candida krusei* (21.2%), and *Candida tropicalis* (6.1%). Females had a significantly higher prevalence compared to males ($p=0.005$), and prevalence was higher among patients above 60 years ($p=0.082$).

Conclusions: While *Candida albicans* is still predominant, the increasing presence of non-albicans species highlights the importance of routine species-level identification.

Keywords: Candiduria, *Candida* species, Catheterization, Urinary tract infection, Prevalence