

# About sanitary dermatology. The Venezuelan case

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## Editorial

Sanitary dermatology, understood as the specialty of medicine of a clinical and surgical nature, responsible for the diagnosis and treatment of tropical diseases that affect the skin, hair and nails, arises in Venezuela with the approach to leprosy, considered endemic in this country and in several Latin American countries, because dermatologists are the ones who have the greatest training for the diagnostic differentiation of leprosy from other skin diseases, then it was up to these medical specialists to assist hospitals for the treatment of such severe pathology (it was believed in the segregation of patients in health institutions).<sup>1,2</sup>

It is the role of health dermatologists to carry out health campaigns for the active search for leprosy cases in rural and urban populations, the identification of contacts, the treatment of diagnosed patients, as well as outpatient and institutional follow-up and control (hospitals and emergency services) sanitary dermatology of the same. With the passage of time, the field of action of sanitary dermatology was extended to the diagnosis and treatment of leishmaniasis and onchocerciasis, for which the field personnel were trained to recognize the mentioned tropical infections, this with the impulse of the notable doctor and Venezuelan researcher Dr. Jacinto Convit.<sup>2,3</sup>

Currently, the sanitary dermatology services of Venezuela, as an organ of the country's Ministry of Health, are responsible for addressing infectious-contagious skin diseases that mainly affect rural populations, but without this meaning the abandonment of the urban population. In countries such as Brazil, Colombia and Mexico, the concept of sanitary dermatology has also been introduced, with small variations, whose programs receive technical and financial support from regional and global health organizations, including effective collaboration between the national and international public and private sectors. international.<sup>3,4</sup>

Here is an example of a healthcare structure with proven and lasting effectiveness, perfectly extrapolated to other Latin American regions, and even more so to tropical regions, because it contributes effectively to solving such important public health problems, because continuity and the use of criteria in the health care offered, in a mix between primary and specialized care, based on scientific evidence for the treatment of skin pathologies and on the rational use of resources.<sup>3,4</sup>

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## Conflicts of interest

The authors declare there is no conflict of interest.

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