

Report of Candida Auris: An Emerging Fungal Pathogen in a Tertiary Healthcare Facility in Ekiti State, Nigeria

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Abstract : Candida auris, an emerging fungus, has been reported in more than 30 countries around the world since its first detection in 2009. Due to its several virulence factors, resistance to antifungals, and persistence in hospital settings, Candida auris has been reported to cause treatment-failure infections. This study was therefore carried out to determine the incidence of Candida auris in a tertiary hospital in Ekiti State, Nigeria. In this study, a total of 115 samples were screened for Candida species using cultural and molecular methods. The carriage of virulence factors and antifungal resistance among C. auris was detected using standard microbiological methods. Candida species isolated from the samples were 15 (30.0%) in clinical samples and 22 (33.85%) in hospital equipment screened. Non-albicans Candida accounted for 3 (20%) and 8 (36.36%) among the isolates from the clinical samples and equipment, respectively. Only five of the non-albicans Candida isolates were C. auris. All the isolates produced biofilm, gelatinase, and hemolysin, while none produced germ tubes. Two of the isolates were resistant to all the antifungals tested. Also, all the isolates were resistant to fluconazole and itraconazole. Nystatin appeared to be the most effective among the tested antifungals. The isolation of Candida auris is being reported for the second time in Nigeria, further confirming that the fungus has spread beyond Lagos and Ibadan, where it was first reported. The extent of the spread of the nosocomial fungus needed to be further investigated and curtailed in Nigeria before its outbreak in healthcare facilities.

Keywords : candida auris, virulence factors, antifungals, pathogen, hospital, infection

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