

CUTANEOUS PHAEOHYPHOMYCOSIS CAUSED BY *SCYTALIDIUM LIGNICOLA* – REPORT OF THE FIRST THREE CASES IN BRAZIL

EMERSON FERREIRA COSTA, BODO WANKE*, PAULO CEZAR FIALHO MONTEIRO*, EDWARD PORTO**/+ , NURIMAR C. F. WANKE***/+ & CARLOS DA SILVA LACAZ**

Departamento de Morfologia, Universidade Federal de Sergipe, Campus Universitário, 49000 Aracaju, SE, Brasil
*Instituto Oswaldo Cruz, Hospital Evandro Chagas, Serviço de Micologia, Caixa Postal 926, 20001 Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brasil **Instituto de Medicina Tropical de São Paulo, Faculdade de Medicina da USP, São Paulo
***Serviço de Dermatologia, Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro

The first cases of cutaneous infection caused by *Scytalidium lignicola*, occurring in Brazil, will be briefly reported. *Case 1* – A 61-year-old white female, born in Campos, state of Rio de Janeiro, but living in the city of Rio de Janeiro since 1939, presented in 1986 with scaling, maceration and erythema of interdigital spaces and chronic thickened and dystrophic toe nails. *Case 2* – A 38-year-old female, born and living in Aracaju, state of Sergipe, presented in 1987 with chronic onychomycosis of the right great toe. On examination the nail was observed to be darkly pigmented, thickened and partially destroyed. *Case 3* – A 37-year-old male, from the state of Paraíba presenting chronic intertriginous lesions, of the feet, was diagnosed in São Paulo by A. R. Costa et al., 1988 (*Mycoses*, 31: 604-612).

In all cases the microscopic examination of skin scales and/or nail scrapings in 10% KOH preparations showed branching, septate, distorted hyaline hyphae, some of them appeared to be slightly pigmented. Arthroconidia were also observed and were sometimes irregular and uniseptate (Fig. 1a).

The cultures on Sabouraud dextrose agar at room temperature showed in the three cases a growthy of dematiaceous fungi. By macroscopic aspect of the colony and micromorphology obtained on slide culture on potato dextrose agar at room temperature the fungi were identified as *Scytalidium lignicola* Pesante, 1957, type species of the genus (M. B. Ellis,

1971, Kew, Surrey, Commonwealth Mycological Institute, p. 28). The typical pycnidia of the synanamorph *Hendersonula toruloidea* Nattrass, 1933, were not obtained on potato dextrose agar as well on corn meal agar medium. The fungus produced on potato dextrose agar, at room temperature, an effuse, cottonous colony, white at first, becoming dark gray and black after 10 days. Slide culture on potato dextrose agar at room temperature showed ochreous hyphae. Micronematous conidiophores with catenulate smooth, thin walled, unicellular, uniseptate arthroconidia were cylindrical and oblong, truncate in each end, light ochreous; a few arthroconidia presented dark septa (bicellular); darkbrown, doliiform arthroconidia presented thick cell wall (Fig. 1b, c, d).

The first case of phaeohyphomycosis caused by *S. lignicola* was reported by B. M. Dickinson et al., 1983 (*J. Clin. Microbiol.*, 17: 155-158) in a human presenting subcutaneous lesion. *S. lignicola* is unfrequent in clinical findings but *Scytalidium hyalinum* is frequently found as etiological agent of "tinea pedis" and onychomycosis (M. K. Moore, 1986, *J. Med. Vet. Mycology*, 24: 219-230). *S. lignicola* has been isolated from wood, roots, soil and fruit-bearer.

The fungus may be initially interpreted as a common dermatophyte in the patient. Although there are only a few cases described in medical literature, the three cases reported in this paper suggest a better attention of clinics and dermatologists.

* Research Fellows CNPq.

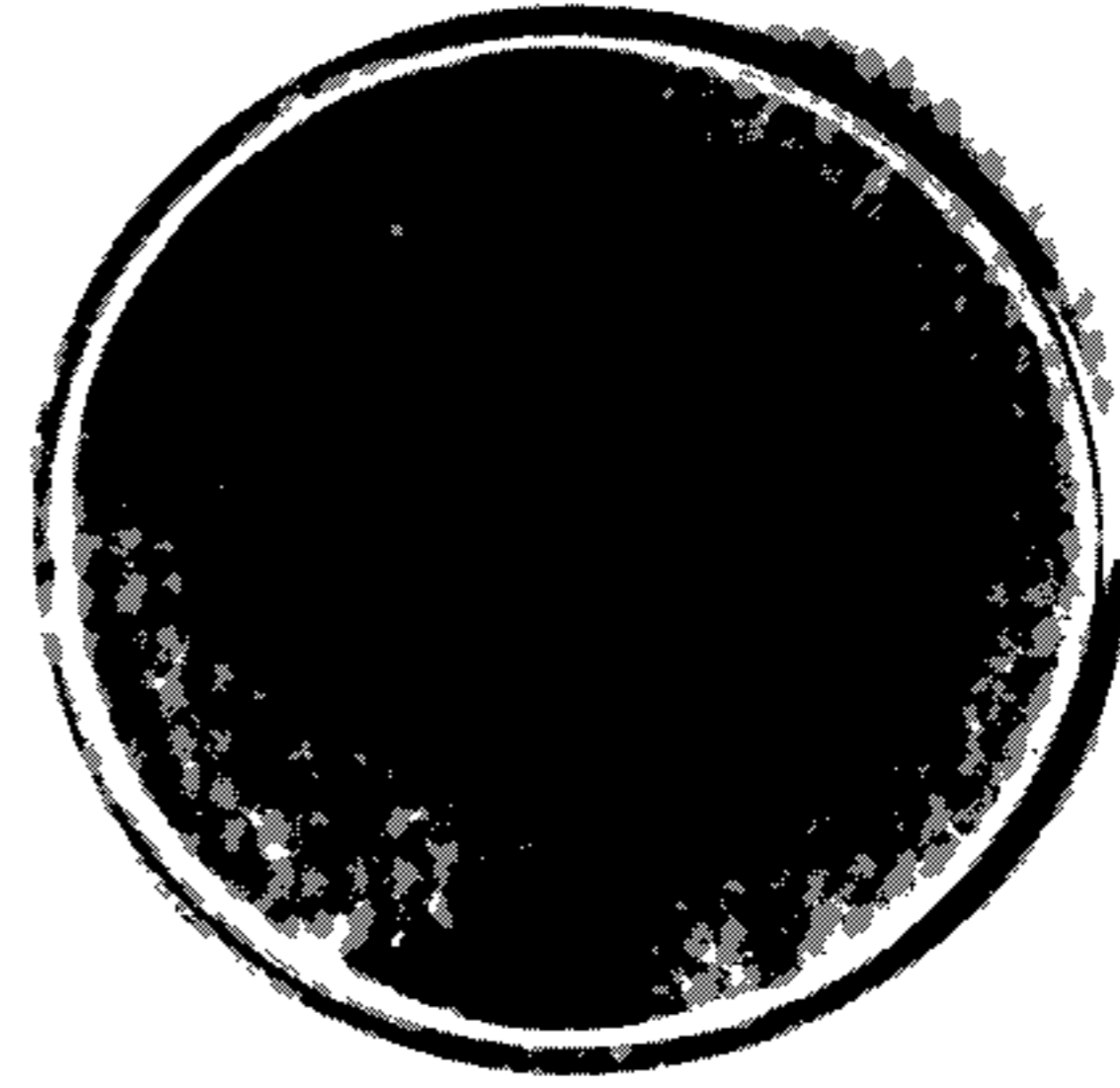


Fig. 1a: skin scales in 10% KOH preparation. Phase contrast, 400x. Fig. 1b: colony of *Scytalidium lignicola* on potato dextrose agar. Fig. 1c: microscopy of potato dextrose agar slide culture, unstained *Scytalidium lignicola* showing ochreous oblong arthroconidia, thin-walled, truncate at each end, many of them unicellular, without septations, and others bicellular (arrows) with one thick and dark septa; at left, doliiform, broader, dark brown, thick-walled arthroconidia (arrow), 1000x. Fig. 1d: intercalated doliiforms, broader, catenulate, dark brown, thick-walled arthroconidia and oblong arthroconidia with dark septa (arrows), 1000x.