

【Social and Psychological Impact】

Arsenicosis can produce a variety of non-clinical social effects, some of which have been documented in countries like Bangladesh and West Bengal (India). Melanosis does not create any problem at all. It is the keratosis, particularly palmar keratosis creates problem. For example, children with palmar arsenical keratosis are not being sent to school to hide the evidence of arsenicosis. Similarly, young women with palmar arsenical keratosis unable them to get married, force to divorce or adopting the borkha. It has profound impact on individual and community level with wrong information to some people about its contagious nature that isolates the patient from school and social involvement.

In addition, some people in those areas believe that: a) such a girl would cause unhappy family conditions, b) such a girl would be sexually

malfunctioned, c) arsenic causes considerable physical damage to a girl and d) additional money will be required for treatment of a newly married woman.

In the poor family domestic water collection and its management is predominantly undertaken by women and girls, who spend considerable amount of time and energy under various conditions on each day to collect drinking water for their families (Crow & Sultana 2002). It is rare for men to participate in domestic water collection.

Arsenic-related weakness and illness causes further economic damage, as people suffering from arsenicosis were increasingly unable to work (Ahmed, 2002). Most of the cases of arsenicosis cannot afford their treatment cost which leads to social crisis and distress selling (Sarker, 2008).

References

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- [2] Crow, B., & Sultana, F. (2002). Gender, class and access to water: Three cases in a poor and crowded delta. *Society of Natural Research*, 15, 709-724.
- [3] Sarker, M. M. R. (2008). Determinates of arsenicosis patients treatment cost in rural Bangladesh. *Bangladesh Journal of Environmental Science*, 14, 80-83.

★ Myth 1

Arsenicosis is an evil spirit/God's curse/sin/contagious disease?