

## **The clinical diagnosis of genital ulcer disease in men in the tropics**

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### **Abstract:**

Since the clinical diagnosis of genital ulcers without laboratory confirmation is not reliable in developed countries, we postulated that clinical diagnosis alone would be no more reliable in developing countries. A presumptive clinical diagnosis of chancroid, genital herpes, syphilis, or lymphogranuloma venereum was made for 100 male patients at the Special Treatment Clinic in Nairobi, Kenya. This diagnosis was then compared to the final diagnosis determined by laboratory identification of the pathogen, by culture, or by serologic response. In 64 patients, a final diagnosis of either chancroid, syphilis, or genital herpes was established. The diagnostic accuracy varied from 75% for chancroid to 42% for syphilis and 43% for herpes. The overall diagnostic accuracy was 66%. The predictive values of positive clinical diagnoses were 84% for chancroid, 60% for syphilis, and 75% for herpes. Thus, clinical diagnosis of genital ulcer disease was not sufficiently reliable in this study