

# Splenectomy in kala-azar

## **Abstract:**

At the beginning of the century, splenectomy was used in the treatment of kala-azar, but now is rarely needed, the major indication being for drug resistant kala-azar. Inadvertent splenectomy prior to the diagnosis of kala-azar continues to occur, probably because of a reluctance to perform splenic aspiration in the investigation of splenomegaly. Five Kenyan children underwent splenectomy for drug resistant kala-azar. All were immediately improved, but one died of overwhelming post splenectomy infection (OPSI) two months later and another of a malignant lymphoma seven months after surgery. The other three patients appear to be cured. Splenectomy was considered in a sixth child with kala-azar because of a Salmonella abscess in the spleen, but the abscess ruptured catastrophically before surgery could be arranged.