



**- Please immediately bring to the attention of all doctors -**

Date: 26 June 2008

## **Mycobacterial abscesses following 'mesotherapy'**

The Communicable Disease Control Branch has received reports of a number of people who have developed multiple skin abscesses on the calves, buttocks, thighs, abdomen, shoulders, face and neck following administration of an alternative therapy known as 'mesotherapy' or 'biomesotherapy'.

Mesotherapy includes injection of minute quantities of various substances, plus normal saline, subcutaneously. Affected patients report receiving mesotherapy over the past 2 months from an alternative therapist in the Gawler area. The Dept of Health has visited the implicated premises and taken public health action to prevent further spread of infection.

One affected patient has an infection with a rapidly-growing *Mycobacterium* species diagnosed on culture of a skin biopsy. A further patient has granulomatous lesions on skin biopsy. Further diagnostic testing is proceeding. It is possible that other organisms may be involved in these cases as it appears that aseptic procedures were not followed. As part of the treatment, some people have also ingested a solution which may have contained mycobacteria.

Mycobacterial abscesses are complex to treat and antibiotic therapy must be based upon susceptibility testing. These infections will not respond to routine antibiotics, and treatment should be managed by an infectious diseases physician. Prolonged combination antimicrobials are often required and surgical resection may be necessary.

### **CDCB requests that medical practitioners:**

**Arrange referral of patients with infections following administration of mesotherapy to the RAH infectious disease clinic or other infectious disease physician for specialist assessment; AND**

**Report immediately any patients seen with multiple skin abscesses following administration of mesotherapy to CDCB on 82267177 (24 hours/7 days).**

**Dr Ann Koehler, Director - Communicable Disease Control Branch**

*Information contained within this advice should be treated as confidential and is for the intended recipient only.*

**PUBLIC HEALTH ALERT**