Cybertutor: a teaching tool in Dermatology
Cybertutor: um objeto de ensino na Dermatologia

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Abstract: It was developed a teaching tool in Dermatology for undergraduate medical students, using an interactive website, the Cybertutor. Clinical cases, lectures and updated bibliography were selected. Photographies of dermatological lesions were taken from ambulatory patients. The topics of the lectures were based on the current curriculum of the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul. The Cybertutor is a dynamic and modern teaching tool, allowing constant innovation.
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Teledermatology has been lately considered an important part of medical education. E-learning can be understood as the use of Internet technologies to increase the knowledge and performance as it allows students to have more control about content, timing, sequencing and rhythm of learning.

The current teaching model for medical students based on traditional theoretical lectures is being discussed as the retention of knowledge and the level of interest of students seem to be decreasing. Studies show that multimedia programs have many advantages in relation to traditional teaching.

So, it was developed an object for medical teaching in Dermatology, using the educational platform named Cybertutor. This study was carried out in the dermatological service of the University Hospital An Bras Dermatol. 2010;85(3):400-2.
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of Porto Alegre (HCPA) and in the Laboratory of Applied Photomedicine and Telemedicine of the Research Center of HCPA and also with the technical support of the discipline “Telemedicine” of the University of São Paulo (USP).

The discipline “Telemedicine” of the University of São Paulo (USP) developed the Cybertutor (electronic tutor) which is a computational system based on the WEB. To carry out the Cybertutor project with emphasis on Dermatology students of the discipline “Introduction to Science” of the Faculty of Medicine of the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS), interns of the dermatologic service of the University Hospital of Porto Alegre (HCPA) and post-graduation students of the Federal University of Porto Alegre (UFRGS) selected some of the most frequent clinical cases of dermatosis. The patients selected were informed about the interest of the staff in photographing their lesions and they signed an agreement consent allowing the use of the images of their lesions to illustrate topics which were part of the syllabus of the program of medical education.

Subsequently to the photographs clinical cases referring to the selected diseases were elaborated containing a brief description of the clinical history and dermatologic exam and also including images of the lesion followed by multiple choice questions about the diagnosis, clinical symptoms and treatment of the condition presented. To each possible answer to the questions it was added a hypertext explaining the reasons why an answer was considered correct or wrong and that information could only be accessed by the student after he/she had answered the question. Lists with updated bibliography that could be easily accessed for each course content were added in the end of the clinical case. As additional help for students there were also included slides presentations.

The development of the Cybertutor in Dermatology was based on the elaboration of didactic clinical cases complemented with relevant theoretic information and updated bibliography. Thirty clinical cases were elaborated about the following dermatosis: mycoses (onychomycosis, pityriasis versicolor, tinea pedis, tinea capitis), sexually transmitted diseases (syphilis, cancrum, lymphogranuloma venereum), eczema (atopic dermatitis, contact eczema, seborrheic dermatitis), cutaneous neoplasias (melanoma, basal cell carcinoma, epidermoid carcinoma), viroses (molluscum, contagiosum, varicella, herpes zoster), zoonosis (scabies, pediculosis, myiasis, larva migrans), nail diseases (paronychia), infections (erysipelas/cellulitis, folliculitis), acne, psoriasis and vitiligo.

The topics of the theoretic lectures were based on the current curriculum of Dermatology of this university. Updated bibliography of each clinical case and theoretic lectures were found through research in MEDLINE indexed magazines between 1997 and 2000, according to the topic of each clinical case, and also through research in textbooks recommended as supplementary reading material for this discipline.

This new technology combines traditional teaching methods with innovative opportunities. Besides that, it is a dynamic, modern and updated method which enables constant updating of medical knowledge in its platform, ensuring updated information about the most varied themes. The Cybertutor allows professors to save time as lectures and video materials broadcasted can be previously recorded and, simultaneously it encourages students to actively manage their role as student.

Further studies will be necessary to assess the performance of students undergoing this new teaching method and, especially, the effectiveness of such a tool and the impact of its use to teach Dermatology to undergraduate medical students in the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS).
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