The current study is based on the clinical reports of three young male laborers, who are working with cadavers of the Division of Anatomy of the Faculty of Dental Sciences, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka. Of the three laborers, two were found to have highly distorted finger nails and one person was found to have and infected inter-capitular region of one of the palms. Both microbiological and pathological investigations were carried out on these patients. Further, a number of specimens of cadavers containing room including the formalin of the cadavers containing tank were subjected for microbiological analysis.

The initial pathological investigations revealed the presence of typical candidal infections of these patients. These specimens were stained with diastase periodic acid schiff (DPAS) and presented with candidal hyphae invasion with micro-abscesses. The microbiological investigations of nail specimens and of the inter-capitular region of the palm demonstrated with C. krusei isolates, when grown Chrom-agar (CHROMagar™ Candida, Paris, France). Further, C. krusei was also isolated only from the formalin of the cadavers containing tank. Chemical analysis of the formalin demonstrated its concentration as 1.5%.

Emerging Candida species such as C. krusei and C. parapsilosis, although are not known to cause predominant infections, a number of studies have indicated its increasing prevalence in superficial infections, especially among the compromised individuals (Samaranayake & Samaranayake, 1994). There are a large number of sources for candidal infections of humans (Samaranayake & MacFarlane, 1990). However, there are no previous clinical reports to indicate that the formalin used in the preservation of biological materials such as human cadavers act as a source of candidal infection of man. Interestingly, our findings indicate formalin acts as possible exogenous source of candidal infections of man.