Characteristics of patients whose whole blood samples were analyzed by RT-qPCR (Fig. 3A). C.F. = clinical form; BI = bacillary index; LL = lepromatous leprosy; ENL = erythema nodosum leprosum; M = male; F = female; AD = at diagnosis of leprosy; AT
= after treatment with MDT; DT = during treatment with multidrug therapy (MDT).

*Patients whose biological samples were harvested only at diagnosis of leprosy.