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The elimination of trachoma as a public health problem, state of Sao Paulo, Brazil

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In State of São Paulo, Brazil the prevalence trachoma in the last school survey was 3.8%. The World Health Organization (WHO) has set the global elimination of trachoma, aiming a prevalence of trachomatous inflammation-follicular (TF) in children aged 1–9 years of < 5%, by 2020. Two strategies are used to verify the elimination: a trachoma census, in the municipalities with <2.000 children 1 and 9 years of age, and household survey using a random sample targeting the poorest census tracks, with the mean per capita income below ¼ of the Brazilian minimum wage, in the larger cities. Trachoma cases diagnosed are notified, treated and re-examined twice, in six-month intervals. The interim results of the progress towards elimination is: trachoma censuses were conducted in 68 municipalities, and prevalence survey conducted in Itapevi and Francisco Morato, municipalities of São Paulo metropolitan area, with a population of 223,408 and 168,234 respectively. In these a two stage cluster sample frame was used to select a sample of 2,400 children in each; the ocular examination with a 2.5X glass, according to WHO criteria. Among children 1 and 9 years of age, trachoma prevalence was 1.5% (79/5393). In the 1 to 9 age group, the prevalence was 1.2% among boys, and 1.7% among girls ($\chi^2=1.73$; $p=0.19$). The prevalence was in Francisco Morato (1.3%) and in Itapevi (1.0%). In trachoma censuses the examined children were 42,276 and a prevalence of TF (475-1.1%). The São Paulo state trachoma elimination plan is being implemented; currently three surveys are being conducted, with the objective to assess the extension and distribution of trachoma, in order to implement the control activities for the elimination as a public health problem. After the elimination, epidemiological surveillance for TF prevalence should be conducted in high risk communities.

Recent Publications

1. Medina N H, Lopes M F, Durkin S R et al. (2011) Survey of trachoma within school students in the state of Roraima, Brazil. *Ophthalmology* 118(10):1938-43.
2. Caligaris L S A, Medina N H, Lansingh V C, Walman E A and Pena F Y (2011) Analyses of cataract surgery performed by the unified health system in Brazil, 2006-2007. *Rev Panam Salud Publica*. 29(6):428-32.
3. Cruz A A, Alencar V M, Medina N H, Volkmer-Ribeiro C, Gattás V L and Luna E (2013) Dangerous waters: outbreak of eye lesions caused by fresh water sponge spicules. *Eye* 27(3): 398-402.
4. Freitas H S A, Lopes M F C, Medina NH et al. (2016) Trachoma in indigenous settlements in Brazil 2000–2008. *Ophthalmic Epidemiol*. 4:1-6.
5. Luna E J A, Lopes M F C, Medina N H et al. (2016) Prevalence of trachoma in schoolchildren in Brazil. *Ophthalmic Epidemiol*. 23:6:360-5.

Biography

Norma Helen Medina has her expertise in Public Health Ophthalmology and Epidemiology of eye diseases. She coordinated activities to assess the ocular health practices, within the neonatal units of the State of São Paulo. She and her team trained more than 800 pediatricians to perform red reflex examination and prevention of blindness in children. Implemented the trachoma control program in São Paulo state and give advisory services to the States and Ministry of Health of Brazil, and Portuguese speaking countries. She collaborated in the elaboration of school eye health manuals and training materials. Her division is responsible to train health personnel to perform primary eye care, prevention of eye disabilities in leprosy and trachoma elimination.

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