

2nd International Conference on

Internal Medicine & Hospital Medicine

September 13-14, 2017 Dallas, USA

Prevalence of parasitic infection among school going children in south India

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Intestinal parasitic infection is one of the major health problems in many developing countries, including India. Intestinal protozoans and helminths are widely prevalent and cause significant medical and public health problems. The study described in this poster was conducted to determine the prevalence of intestinal parasitic infections in the age group of 8 – 12 years and also correlate their growth parameters to parasitic infections. About 500 students participated in the study, detailed history and physical examination was done and stool samples were collected. In our study, out of 500 samples, 280 were positive for intestinal helminths. Among 280 positive samples, 180 (64.3%) were boys and 100 (35.2%) were girls. Furthermore, out of 280 positive samples, 110 (39.2%) were positive for *Ascaris lumbricoides*, 80 (28.5%) for *Ancylostoma duodenale*, 40 (14.2%) for *Strongyloides stercoralis*, 27 (9.6%) for *Hymenolepis nana* and 23 (8.2%) for *Enterobius vermicularis*. In our study, 40.3% of infested children were underweight and 29.6% of infested children were short stature. The results from our study indicate that parasitic infections are more common in male children and these infections had a drastic effect on growth of these children. Appropriate diagnosis, effective health education, prompt treatment, regular deworming and better sanitary measures will reduce the parasitic infections and improve the health status of children.

Biography

Pavithra Saikumar is a visiting scholar in Genetics and Stem Cell Laboratory at University of Pacific, San Francisco, where she is currently researching the effect of Folic Acid in ameliorating hypoxia induced stem cell changes, and its correlation to non-syndromic craniofacial cleft lip and palate. Pavithra obtained her medical degree from India, at the culmination of which she was awarded the "Best Outgoing Student" for her academic excellence and research interests. She worked in Department of Internal Medicine where she treated patients and organized medical camps in rural and underserved areas. She plans to continue her research and provide healthcare as a physician in the US.

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