

Frequency of intestinal parasites in patients with malignancy, admitted in oncology ward of Sina Hospital, Hamadan, Iran

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Abstract

Background & Objective: Enteroparasitic infections constitute a serious public health problem in different populations including developed countries. Patients who receive chemotherapy of cancer have an increased probability of acquiring parasitic infections, generally with a high degree of severity. The aim of present study was to ascertain the frequency of intestinal parasites in patients admitted in oncology ward for chemotherapy.

Materials & Methods: In a descriptive study, all the patients with malignancy who admitted in Sina Hospital in Hamadan, Iran, during 2005 were included. Data including demographic characteristics, type of malignancy, and the time past from the diagnosis entered the questionnaires. A stool specimen was examined for each patient. Data were analyzed using SPSS software.

Results: Out of 190 patients, 94 (49.5%) were male and 96 (50.5%) were female. The mean age was 48.5 ± 18.7 years (12-88 years). Thirty-one (16.3%) patients were involved with intestinal parasites. The most common parasites were: *Ascaris* (41.9%), *Giardia* (35.5%), *Indolimax nana* (3.2%), *Blastocytis hominis* (3.2%), and *Cryptosporidium* (3.2%). The highest prevalence of intestinal parasites belonged to 40-60 years age group.

Conclusion: This study indicated that, the prevalence of intestinal parasites in patients undergoing chemotherapy for malignancy is lower than general population, which can be related to the effect of antineoplastic agents.

Key Words: Intestinal parasites, Malignancy, Opportunistic parasites

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