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Clinical Presentation and Intensity of Infection with Intestinal Helminths among School Children in Ile-Ife, Osun State, Nigeria

Présentation Clinique et Intensité de l'Infection par les Helminthes Intestinaux chez les Écoliers d'Ile-Ife, État d'Osun, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

BACKGROUND: Intestinal helminthiasis are public health problems of children in developing countries of the world and account for significant morbidity as it results in stunted growth, intestinal obstruction, anaemia, cognitive impairment, acute pancreatitis, acute cholecystitis and rectal prolapse. This study assessed intestinal helminths, infection intensity and symptoms in primary school children in Ile-Ife.

METHODS: It was a cross sectional study. Three hundred and eighty-four pupils randomly selected from six public primary schools in Ife Central Local Government were enrolled for the study. Ethical approval was obtained. Stool samples were collected and processed using the Formol-ether concentration method. Questionnaires were administered to obtain relevant information. Data entry and processing were done using Microsoft excel and IBM SPSS

Statistics for windows, version 17. Statistical analysis included frequency, proportion and percentages.

RESULTS: Helminthic parasites were recovered from the stool of the schoolchildren and the overall prevalence of helminthic infection was 24%. *Ascaris lumbricoides* was the most prevalent (22.1%) with moderate and light intensities of infection, Hookworm (3.4%) with light intensity infection and *Hymenolepis nana* 0.3%. Symptoms were present in 48.2% of the participants and 31.5% presented with abdominal pain, nausea 22.1%, diarrhoea 21.1%, anorexia 7%. Weight loss, nausea and vomiting were found to be significantly associated with infection with intestinal helminths.

CONCLUSION: Light to moderate intestinal helminthic infections are still prevalent among school children with weight loss, nausea and vomiting being the most significant symptoms. Continuous studies among school children are needed including those in private schools to better understand the epidemiology of these infections. **WAJM 2022; 39(6): 568–572.**

Keywords: Helminths, Intensity, School children, Symptoms.

RÉSUMÉ

BACKGROUND: Les helminthiases intestinales sont des problèmes de santé publique, des enfants dans les pays en voie de développement du monde et représentent une morbidité importante, car elles entraînent un retard de croissance, l'obstruction intestinale, l'anémie, les troubles cognitifs, la pancréatite aiguë, la cholécystite aiguë et prolapsus rectal. Cette étude a évalué les helminthes intestinaux, l'intensité de l'infection et les symptômes chez les enfants des écoles primaires d'Ile-Ife.

MÉTHODES: Il s'agissait d'une étude transversale. Trois cent quatre-vingt-quatre élèves choisis au hasard dans six écoles primaires publiques de Ife Central Local Government ont été recrutés pour l'étude. L'approbation éthique a été obtenue. Les échantillons de selles ont été collectés et traités en utilisant la méthode de concentration Formol-Ether. Des questionnaires ont été administrés pour obtenir des informations pertinentes. La saisie et le traitement des données ont été effectués à l'aide de Microsoft Excel et IBM SPSS. Statistique pour windows, version 17. L'analyse statistique comprenait fréquence, proportion et pourcentages.

RÉSULTATS: Les parasites helminthiques ont été récupérés dans les selles des écoliers et la prévalence globale de l'infection helminthique était de 24%. *Ascaris lumbricoides* était le plus répandu (22,1%) avec une intensités d'infection modérée et légère, l'ankylostome (3,4%) avec une intensités d'infection légère et *Hymenolepis nana* 0,3 %. Les symptômes étaient présents chez 48,2% des participants et 31,5% présentaient des douleurs abdominales, nausées 22,1%, diarrhées 21,1%, anorexie 7%. La perte de poids, les nausées et les vomissements ont été associés de manière significative à l'infection par des helminthes intestinaux.

CONCLUSION: Les infections légères à modérées par les helminthes intestinaux sont encore répandues chez les écoliers, la perte de poids, les nausées et les vomissements étant les symptômes les plus significatifs. Des études continues parmi les enfants scolarisés, y compris dans les écoles privées, sont nécessaires pour mieux comprendre l'épidémiologie de ces infections. **WAJM 2022; 39(6): 568–572.**

Mots-clés: Helminthes, Intensité, Enfants scolarisés, Symptômes.

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Abbreviations: BMI, Body Mass Index; SPSS, Statistical Package of the Social Sciences; STH, Soil Transmitted Helminths; WHO, World Health Organisation.