

Current Status of Nation-wide Control on Intestinal Parasitic Diseases Especially on Enterobiasis

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Abstract

Prevention of intestinal parasites in Taiwan began in 1972. Students were the focus of prevention efforts. After 30 years, infection rates of ascariasis, ancylostomiasis, and whipworm infection have decreased to less than 1%. However, prevalence of enterobiasis remained at 2%-5%. Because pinworms are still spread among students and younger children, and no nationwide information on the current status of enterobiasis in Taiwan is available, we collected data from around the country to understand the prevalence of enterobiasis in each county/city. The results showed that: 1. most programs in county/city are sponsored by the education bureaus; 2. laboratory intestinal parasite examination are usually for elementary school students; 3. focus of prevention efforts is on enterobiasis, although screening for ascariasis, ancylostomiasis, and whipworm infectious are still being conducted for mountainous villages and off-shore islands; 4. there is great variability in prevalence rates; during 2001-2004, the lowest rate was 0.75%, and the highest was 11.27%; in 2005, the lowest was 0.52%, and the highest 14.48%; 5. treatment of intestinal infectious are mainly stool positive cases and their family members;

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6. drugs for treatment were mainly provided by contract hospitals. In 2005, there were 8 counties which had higher prevalence of enterobiasis compared to the average from the past 1-4 years; two counties have prevalence above 9%. These indicate that strengthening the prevention of enterobiasis in certain areas is still need.

Keywords: parasites, enterobiasis, prevalence, screening