Helminthoses: Still an actual health threat for children in 21st century

Due to the rapid growth of human population, helminthoses, a diseases caused by the parasitic worms, represent a health problem not only in developing but also in industrialized countries. It is well known that these parasitic infections are very often endemic and easily transmitted to the places with poor sanitation and in crowded living conditions. Many of helminthoses are diagnosed particularly in children and adolescents. In our study, the occurrence of selected helminths in the pediatric population resided in Eastern Slovakia was monitored. Less than 25 % of examined children were positive for the presence of intestinal parasites. *Ascaris lumbricoides* was found to be the leading parasite followed by *Trichuris trichiura, Hymenolepis nana* and *H. diminuta*. Higher helminth prevalence was detected in children living in rural areas when compared to the children residing in urban environment. In comparison to the group of healthy children living in good conditions the prevalence of helminths was higher within the group of children with lower socioeconomic status. The occurrence of these epidemiologically lower risk parasites in Roma children population was caused by low hygienic standards in the Roma settlements. It is apparent that under such conditions helminthosis represent a serious health risk for children. A low standard of living, inadequate communal and personal hygiene leads to the ecologically unsafe, contaminated and devastated environment. In order to eliminate public health risks, it is necessary to perform a complex analysis of many aspects including epizootological and epidemiological factors that considerably contribute to the onset, development and spread of endoparasitoses. Helminthoses together with the other infections endanger the health status of the majority population.

Biography

Ingrid Papajova was graduated in 1997 from the Faculty of Natural Sciences, University of Pavol Jozef Safarik in Kosice with major in Biology and Chemistry. She has received her PhD from the Institute of Parasitology of the SAS in 2001. Following her successful thesis defense presentation entitled “Ecological factors and their impact on the tenacity of the enteronematode eggs” she has obtained an Associate Professor position in 2014. Since 2000, she has been working as Parasitologist (Senior Researcher) at the Institute of Parasitology of the SAS in Kosice. In 2002, she became the Head of the Department of Environmental and Plant Parasitology.

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