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Toxocara eggs in the soil of public places and schools in Basrah, Iraq.

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Abstract

One hundred and eighty soil samples were collected from public places and school yards in urban and rural areas in Basrah between October 1991 and March 1992. Each sample was examined by zinc sulphate flotation and sedimentation. Toxocara eggs were found in 22 samples (12.2%). Of the recovered positive samples 10 contained viable and fully embryonated eggs. Viable eggs were observed in higher proportions of soils collected from the surroundings of Basrah slaughter-house, where there are large numbers of dogs and cats. The observed mean number of eggs per 5 g of soil was 2.8 +/- 1.9 S.D. The contamination rate in urban areas (17.3%) was significantly higher ($P < 0.05$) than that in rural areas (6.1%). Thirteen of 116 samples (11.2%) collected from public places and nine of 64 samples (14.1%) from school yards contained Toxocara eggs. Urban public places and schools have higher contamination rates (18.0% and 16.2%, respectively) than those in rural areas (3.6% and 11.1%), but the differences are significant ($P < 0.05$) between public places only.

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