

EV1004

ePoster Viewing

Public health and community-acquired infections

Prevalence of *Toxocara canis* ova in soil samples collected from public areas of Attica Prefecture, Greece

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The aim of the present study was to examine the soil contamination with *Toxocara canis* ova and to determine human seroprevalence in Attica Prefecture, Greece. The ova detection was based on the Kazacos' technique. *T. canis* IgG antibodies were measured using Ridascreen testing kit (Biopharm AG). A total of 1510 soil samples were collected from 33 public places of six large areas of Attica. *Toxocara canis* eggs were found in 258 samples, indicating an overall contamination proportion of 17.08%. Contamination with *Toxocara* eggs was observed in 94% of the 33 places examined. The contamination rates were greater in areas of lower socio-economic conditions. Sera were collected from 200 adults (104 males, 96 females) and 50 children <14 years (32 males, 18 females). *T. canis* seropositivity was established in 16.13% of serum samples in total. The proportion of seropositive samples was 60% (30 out of 50) in the group of children and 12.5% (25 out of 200) among adults ($p < 0.0001$).

Attica Prefecture exhibited a high *T. canis* soil contamination rate, therefore individuals and especially children might be at great risk for toxocariasis when exposed in public areas. Preventive measures should be implemented in order to control the spread of this parasitic infection.