

FURTHER OBSERVATION ON THE INCIDENCE OF HEPATICOLA (CAPILLARIA) HEPATICA OVA IN HUMAN FECES

HARRY E. WRIGHT

*From the Gorgas Memorial Laboratory, Panama, Republic de Panama, and Baylor
University College of Medicine, Dallas, Texas*

During the months of June, July, and August, 1937, 517 persons in six Chagres River villages in Panama were examined for intestinal parasites. Four hundred and seventy-eight, or 92.4 per cent, were found to harbor one or more parasites. The region in which these villages are located is designated as unsanitated in contradistinction to the completely sanitized Canal Zone. The inhabitants are chiefly negroid stock, descendants of Jamaicans brought to Panama during the construction days.

The term parasite as used here refers to the organisms listed below only, and in percentage incidence as follows:

	per cent
<i>Endamoeba histolytica</i>	32.4
Hookworm.....	52.0
Ascaris.....	46.7
<i>Trichuris trichiura</i>	30.3
Strongyloides.....	34.2
Two cases of <i>Balantidium coli</i> infestation were encountered.	

In one village, New San Juan, 194 persons were examined. In this group, ova of *Hepaticola hepatica* were found in sixteen. The ova were plentiful and easily found in the initial search of an unconcentrated saline preparation. They appeared to be unaltered in structure, and were largely in the blastula stage. It was not possible, however, to produce further embryonation by cultivation. It was not possible to bring any of these persons into the hospital for further observation, but repeated examinations were possible on eleven of the cases. Ten days following the initial finding, ten of these cases were negative; in one, an occasional ovum was found.

Rats and cockroaches caught in the sixteen houses occupied by these individuals failed to reveal ova in their droppings. Neither worms nor ova were found at autopsy of the rats and cockroaches. We are, therefore, unable to show at this time that these cases were actually parasitized with the worm as recorded in one case by McArthur (1) in 1924.

From our observations here, we must conclude that these ova were present simply as a contamination as suggested by Faust (2) who found *Hepaticola hepatica* ova in the stools of nine individuals in these same villages in 1930.

REFERENCES

- (1) McARTHUR, W. P. A case of infestation of the human liver with *Hepaticola hepatica*. Proc. R. Soc. Med. (Sec. Trops. Dis. Parasitol.), 17, 83-84, 1924.
- (2) FAUST, E. C., AND MARTINEZ, W. H. Jour. Parasitol., 21, 332-336, 1935.