SHORT REPORT: HUMAN INFECTION WITH TRICHINELLA BRITOVI IN GRANADA, SPAIN

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Abstract. An outbreak of trichinellosis caused by ingestion of pork infected with Trichinella britovi occurred in the province of Granada in southern Spain in April–May 2000. Thirty-eight people were affected and 15 of them were hospitalized at the University Hospital of San Cecilio (Granada). The probable source of infection was sausage made from uninspected wild boar meat and inspected pork. Ninety-two percent of the patients had myalgias, 47.6% had diarrhea and/or vomited, 78.6% had periorbital edema, and 76.0% had fever. Twenty-two patients (15 hospitalized and 7 nonhospitalized) were serologically studied. Eosinophil levels were less than 5% of the total leukocyte count in 86.7% of the patients. Levels of creatinine phosphokinase (range = 200–2,213 U/L) and lactate dehydrogenase (range = 560–7,558 U/L) were elevated in 78.67%. Twenty-two of the 38 patients (15 hospitalized and 7 nonhospitalized) were positive by the IIF test with titers ranging from 1:20 to 1:10,240 (most common titer = 1:2,560). Twenty patients (90.9%) were positive by Western blot.

In Spain, pork and wild boar are the main sources of trichinellosis. Although it is a notifiable disease, it remains a major public health problem because the parasite is enzootic in domestic and wild animals. Andalusia, the region in which Granada is located, is a region that is endemic for this disease. It is worth noting that from 1984 to 2000, 19 outbreaks of trichinellosis were reported in Andalusia. The actual incidence is probably greater because asymptomatic cases are abundant. Our clinical findings did not differ from those reported by others. Eosinophil counts and muscle enzyme levels were higher than those found in other infections with T. britovi. In addition, Western blotting has been shown to be more effective than the IIF test in the diagnosis of trichinellosis.

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