

The status of schistosomiasis disease among coastal countries of Persian gulf in the middle east

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Letter to Editor

Schistosomiasis is a parasitic disease caused by parasitic species of *Schistosoma* in human and animals. The disease is endemic in many tropical and developing countries. Roughly 240 million people worldwide are infected with the fluke worm, suffered from eggs and also 700 million are at risk.^{1,2} Over 90% of the disease is currently found in sub-Saharan Africa, where a population of more than 200,000 deaths occurred annually is attributed to schistosomiasis, and also occurring in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) regions.^{3,4} The both urinary (in Iran, Iraq, Algeria and Morocco) and hepatic (in other MENA countries) forms of schistosomiasis appear in the region.^{5,6} The blood-dwelling fluke worms species of *Schistosoma* namely *Schistosoma haematobium* (causing urinary infection), *S. mansoni* and *S. japonicum* (both cause intestinal schistosomiasis) are agents of the disease.^{7,8} According to WHO and several other reports, among the Middle East countries, Yemen and Iraq have the highest rate of people living in poverty and risk of the disease. Turkey, Syria and Tunisia are in very low risk of the disease.⁹ Unsuitable conditions such as civil wars, a deteriorating economy and severe depletion in water resources in this country have culminated in the propensity to several diseases in addition to this, comprising soil-transmitted helminthiasis, onchocerciasis, lymphatic filariasis, fascioliasis, leishmaniasis, trachoma disease and leprosy.¹⁰ Other countries in this region exist in low prevalence score.¹¹ From the results it is presumed that because of current war and famine in several countries of Middle East, the risk of schistosomiasis infection is higher than several years ago.

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Conflicts of interest

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