

CONCURRENT GASTROINTESTINAL NEMATODES AND PSOROPTIC MANGE INFESTATION IN SHEEP: CLINICAL INVESTIGATION, SOME BIOCHEMICAL ALTERATION AND TREATMENT

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Received: 22. 10. 2002

Accepted: 8. 2. 2003

SUMMARY

Four hundred and eighteen native breed of sheep aged 6-18 months were reared in a private farm belongs to Wady El-Moallak, Ismaillia governorate, Egypt, were examined for the presence of internal parasites and mange. Faecal samples and skin scrapings were collected from diseased animals for parasitological examination and serum for biochemical analysis. Faecal examination revealed that, 121 out of 418 sheep were naturally infested with gastrointestinal nematodes, indicating that the prevalence rate in the examined flock was 28.9%. The most prevalent nematodes recovered by larval cultural were *Trichostrongylus* spp. (33.9%), *Haemonchus* spp. (30.6%), *Oestertagia* spp. (18.2%) and *Nematodiurus* spp. (17.4%).

While, skin scraping examination revealed that, 95 out of 418 sheep (22.7%) were naturally infested with psoroptic mange. Mixed infestation of

gastrointestinal nematodes and psoroptic mange were recorded in 86 cases. A high rate (71.1%) of psoroptes ovis was found in gastrointestinal nematodes infested sheep, while it was low (3%) in gastrointestinal nematodes free animals.

On the other side, serum biochemical analysis of minerals, total proteins and some vitamins in sera of infested animals revealed significant decrease in the levels of calcium, inorganic phosphorus, copper, zinc, total proteins and vitamins A and E, while significant increase in serum creatinine level was noticed. Treatment of the infested animals with doramectin 1% (Dectomax) was found to be effective against gastrointestinal nematodes and psoroptic mange. In addition, supplementation of the diet with minerals and vitamins, beside spraying of the stables with diazinon assisted in recovery of the infested animals.

The present observation declare the problem of naturally occurring of gastrointestinal nematodes-psoroptic mange interaction in sheep and it could be concluded that, GIN infestation can enhance the establishment, survival and pathogenicity of concomitant psoroptic mange infestation.

INTRODUCTION

Parasitic gastroenteritis is an important disease in animals specially sheep which causes many losses in body weight, milk & wool and death in many young animals (Umur and Arslan, 2000). Economic losses due to gastrointestinal nematode (GIN) parasites in sheep throughout the world and Egypt are considerable. (Spell et al 2001). Parasitic infection ranges from acute disease, frequently with high rates of mortality, chronic disease, resulting in various degrees of morbidity and premature culling, to subclinical infection (Martin and Aitken, 1999).

The incidence of the parasitic diseases varies greatly between areas depending on many factors such as nutrition; pasture, management, climate and immunity (Miller et. al 1998). The prevalence and trials of treatment of parasitic gastroenteritis in Egypt among sheep were investigated by many authors as Shawkat et. al (1991), Fawzia et. al (1994), Abdel-Rahman et. al (1996) and El-Sawalhy and Hassan (1996).

Mange is also of considerable economic signifi-

cance because of poor animal growth, loss of condition and the downgrading of wool & leather (Ó'Brien 1999, Marchand 1984 and Khan et. al, 1999). Loss of body weight attributable to parasitoses was put at 25-30% for mange (Naidu and Rao 2000).

In this study, a concurrent gastrointestinal nematodes and mange infestations in sheep have been investigated, beside some serum biochemical analysis and trials of treatment.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

- **Investigated animals:-** 418 sheep of native breed aged 6-18 months, belonging to a private farm in Wady El-Moallak, Ismaillia governorate, Egypt were used. The clinical examination of diseased sheep was carried out.
- **Samples:- a. Faecal samples** were collected from 418 sheep individually and directly from rectum in clean plastic containers and examined as soon as possible for the presence of parasitic gastroenteritis nematodes.

Parasitological examination was done microscopically by using the concentration flotation method for nematode eggs according to Kelly (1984). Gastrointestinal nematodes infestation was evaluated by faecal egg count (FEC) per gram by using McMaster technique according to Solusby (1982). The faecal culture and larval dif-

ferentiation were carried out according to Georgi (1980).

b. Skin scraping:- samples were collected from the edges of recent observed lesions upon the bodies of the diseased sheep. Each sample was prepared for microscopical examination using 10% KOH (Mackie and McCartney, 1975) and identification of mites was performed according to Solusby (1982).

*** Serum analysis:-** Serum of diseased animals was subjected to biochemical analysis were done. Estimation of serum total proteins according to the method described by Doumas et. al (1981) was carried out, calcium, inorganic phosphorus, copper and zinc were estimated according to Gindler (1972), Fernandez and Kahn (1971) and Versieck et. al (1974) respectively; creatinine was estimated by kits according to Husdan and Rapapost (1968), and vitamin A level was determined by using trifluoroacetic acid according to Neeld and Pearson (1963), while serum vitamin E level was determined according to Hidioglou and Karpinski (1987).

Treatment:- Treatment were carried out by using doramectin 1% (Dectomax, pfizer, France, batch No. 178400) tried by subcutaneous injection in a dose of 1ml/50kg. B.W. for the diseased sheep either infested with GIN or mange. Also, the dis-

eased animals were supplemented with minerals and vitamins in diet, mineral mixture (1kg/1 ton of feed, UCCMA, Egypt, batch No. 6600) and vitamin AD3E (1kg/1 ton of feed, Arab Co Vet, Egypt, batch No. 010905).

- Diazinon (Diazinon-60, ADWIA, Egypt, batch No. 021063) 1/1000 conc. spray for the stables was used as a control measure to the mange.

Faecal samples and skin scraping were taken from treated sheep after 7 and 14 days post treatment and examined.

Statistical Analysis:- The obtained data were computed and analysed for significance using t test according to Selvin (1996). Moreover variability between the groups of sheep was done by analysis of variance (ANOVA) on a computer program (SAS, 1996).

RESULTS

The diseased sheep were suffering from diarrhea, rough coat, reduced of growth rate, loss of weight, emaciation and unthriftness. Submandibular oedema was observed in 6 cases. Skin affection appeared on some cases in addition to the previous signs. The skin lesions were observed on the wether, flanks, back and thighs. There were itching manifested by biting and rubbing of the

infested skin; the skin of the affected areas was thickened with some fissures as well as denuded crusts; the wool was broken and extirpated.

Results of the parasitological examination of faecal samples revealed gastrointestinal nematode eggs in 121 sheep out of 418 animals (28.9%) and the mean number of eggs per gram (EPG) by Mc

Master technique was 2200 egg/gram. While, the results of faecal culture for larval differentiation revealed the infestation of these animals with *Trichostrongylus* spp., *Haemonchus* spp., *Oestertagia* spp. and *Nematodiurus* spp. (Table 1).

Skin scraping examination recorded 95 sheep were infested with mange (22.7%); table (2). The

Table (1): Result of larval differentiation of faecal culture:

No. of infested sheep	<i>Trichostrongylus</i>		<i>Haemonchus</i> spp.		<i>Oestertagia</i> spp.		<i>Nematodiurus</i> spp.	
	No.	+ve%	No.	+ve%	No.	+ve%	No.	+ve%
121	41	33.9	37	30.6	22	18.2	21	17.4

Table (2): Results of parasitological examination of faecal samples and skin scraping:

Total No. of examined sheep	No. of infested with GIN	Percentage	No. of infested with mite	Percentage	No. of mixed infestation
418	121	28.9%	95	22.7%	86

Table (3): Results of psoroptic mite recovered from GIN infested and GIN free animals

Total No. of examined sheep	No. of GIN infested sheep	No. of M.I.A. recovered from GIN infested sheep	Positive percentage	No. of GIN free sheep	No. of M.I.A. recovered from GIN free sheep	Positive percentage
418	121	86	71.1%	297	9	3%

GIN = Gastro intestinal nematodes
M.I.A. = Mite infested animals

mites were identified as *psoroptes ovis*. Mixed infestation of gastrointestinal nematodes and psoroptic mange was observed in 86 cases. The percentage of infestation with psoroptic mange in GIN infested sheep was high (71.1%) in which 86 animals out of 121 GIN infested one, while it was low (3%) in GIN free sheep (9 ani-

mals out of 297 one) Table (2,3)

Results of serum analysis revealed significant biochemical alteration in minerals, total proteins, creatinine and vitamins A and E. (Table 4).

Table (4): Results of biochemical analysis:- (Mean \pm S.E.)

Parameters	Apparently normal sheep (Non infested)	Sheep infested with GIN	Sheep infested with mange	Mixed GIN and Mange infestation
Calcium (mg%)	9.15 \pm 0.16	7.22* \pm 0.40	8.12• \pm 0.14	6.95* \pm 0.016
Phosphorus (mg%)	6.16 \pm 0.18	4.50* \pm 0.72	5.17• \pm 0.56	4.13* \pm 0.69
Copper (p.p.m.)	118.40 \pm 2.4	92.15• \pm 0.22	98.46• \pm 0.26	89.88* \pm 0.35
Zinc (p.p.m.)	102.06 \pm 1.16	83.12• \pm 1.10	89.29• \pm 1.20	78.64* \pm 1.14
Total proteins (g/dL)	6.96 \pm 0.12	6.25• \pm 0.18	6.55• \pm 0.14	6.05* \pm 0.16
Creatinine (mg/dL)	0.97 \pm 0.02	1.6• \pm 0.04	1.32• \pm 0.06	1.94• \pm 0.03
Vitamin A (mg/100ml)	1.75 \pm 0.90	1.25• \pm 0.30	1.35• \pm 0.60	1.10* \pm 0.30
Vitamin E (mg/100ml)	2.80 \pm 1.10	2.10• \pm 0.75	2.30• \pm 0.90	2.0• \pm 0.35

S. E.= Stander error.

• Significant at P<0.05.

* Highly significant at P < 0.01.

Table (5): Result of examined samples taken from treated sheep (7 and 14 days post treatment)

Samples	No. of examined samples	7 days post treatment		14 days post treatment	
		No. of +ve	Efficacy %	No. of +ve	Efficacy %
Faecal sample for GIN egg	121	12	90%	0	100%
Skin scraping for mite	95	14	85.3%	0	100%

Treatment:-

Doramectin 1% (Dectomax) at a dose of 1ml/50kg. B. W. S/C. injection was proved to be effective against gastrointestinal nematodes and posroptic mange. Clinical improvement was observed after treatment of infested sheep as indicated by disappearance of previously recorded signs. Spraying the stables with diazinon controlled the mange disease.

Faecal examination and skin scraping which were taken from treated sheep after 14 days post treatment revealed negative results.

DISCUSSION

Gastrointestinal helminths are major contributors to reduced productivity and can lower the production of meat, milk and wool (Maiti et. al. 1999). In intensive farming systems, control is achieved

through regular treatment with anthelmintics. The prevalence rate of infestation; severity of signs of parasitism and damage to the gastrointestinal tract will be influenced by host age, breed, immunological experience, management, pasture, climate and nutritional status (Miller et. al 1998; Martin & Aitken, 1999 and Valderrabano et. al 2002).

This investigation revealed the parasite spectrum and the prevalence of gastrointestinal nematodes infestation in naturally infested sheep in Wady El-Moallak, Ismailia governorate, Egypt. Of the 418 investigated sheep, 121 animals (28.9%) were infested with GIN. The nematodes recovered from sheep by larval cultural were *trichostrongylus spp.* (33.9%), *Haemonchus spp.* (30.6%), *Oestertagia spp.* (18.2%) and *Nematodirus spp.* (17.4%). The previously mentioned clinical signs of diseased sheep and the results of faecal examination and faecal culture were nearly similar to these previously reported in Egypt by Degheidy (1981), Shawkat et. al (1991), Fawzia et. al (1994) and El-

Sawalhy and Hassan (1996).

Results of skin scraping examination revealed that 95 out of 418 (22.7%) sheep were naturally infested with psoroptic mange. The mites have been identified as *psoroptes ovis*. This result agree with Mage (1998), Corke and Broom (1999), Ochs et. al (1999) and Taylor (1999). At farm level relevant factors must be considered in approaching the mange outbreak such as source of infestation, helminth parasite status and general health status of the flock (O'Brien 1999). On the other hand, mixed infestation of gastrointestinal nematodes and psoroptic mange were recorded in 86 animals out of 121 GIN infested one (71.1%), while it was low (3%) in GIN free animals (9 animals out of 297 one).

From the obtained results it could be concluded that gastrointestinal nematodes may enhance susceptibility of sheep to psoroptic mange and predispose to infestation and provides data on naturally occurring concurrent GIN-mange infestation in reared sheep and declares the problem of their infestation in sheep. Naturally occurring of parasitic diseases in farm animals are frequently caused by concurrent infections with two or more immunobiologically unrelated or remotely related species of parasites (Fakae and Chiejina, 1993), while, Christensen et. al. (1987) reported that heterologous parasite - parasite interaction in domestic animals may give rise to the prolonged survi-

val and enhanced pathogenicity of one of the concomitant infections. Also, Zeybek (1985), Wosu (1988), Bruere and West (1993) and Fritsche et. al (1993) reported that gastrointestinal nematodes naturally infested with mange. However, these infestations were always reported as separate health problems in their own right and no consideration was given to the implication of concurrent infestation.

Regarding serum biochemical analysis to of minerals, total proteins, creatinine and vitamins A & E, the obtained results in our study demonstrated a significant decrease in the levels of calcium, inorganic phosphorus, copper, zinc, total proteins and vitamins A and E. A significant decrease ($P<0.5$) was showed either with gastrointestinal nematodes or psoroptic mange infested animals, while high significantly decrease ($P<0.01$) was shown in mixed infestation. Similar results were reported by many authors as El-Gharieb et. al. (1995), Paranagama et. al (1997) and Butter et. al (2000). They attributed these results to the nematodes infestation which induces desquamation & sloughing of the epithelium, villous atrophy and consequently decreases absorption of minerals & other food nutrients and inappetance. Moreover, the results recorded significant increase ($P<0.5$) in serum creatinine. The result recorded normal value of serum creatinine in non infested sheep, while the value was increased in infested sheep

with GIN and mixed GIN with mange. This results were nearly similar to these previously recorded by Metwalli (1987) and Omer et. al (1995). They attributed these changes to kidney impairments and dysfunction caused by toxins produced by parasites. Vitamins A and E deficiency may increase the susceptibility of sheep to infection with parasites (Omar et. al. 1995). It seems very essential for increasing the disease resistance that a daily allowance of both vitamins A and E should be given. Sheep on poor nutrition have significantly higher mite population, more scurf and greater fleece derangement (Radostits et. al. 2000). Inadequate nutrition of some minerals (copper and zinc) alter immunocompetence in animals and minerals deficient status leads to increased susceptibility to infectious illnesses (Sherman 1992).

The control of the nematodes depend on grazing management and/or anthelmintic treatment, the anthelmintic treatment has been the primary control method (Waller 1994 Hertzberg et. al. 2001 and Maingi et. al 2002). Treatment of the infested animals with doramectin 1% (Dectomax) in dose of 1ml/50Kg. B.W.S/C. injection was found to be effective. The result have been shown it to be have full therapeutic efficacy against gastrointestinal nematodes and psoroptic mange. The drug gave an efficacy reached to 90% and 85.3% on GIN and mange respectively after 7 days post treatment; while; parasitological examination of

faecal samples and skin scraping which taken from treated animals after 14 days revealed negative result (efficacy 100%). Of course when used correctly endectocides have many advantages. Endectocides have both anthelmintic and acaricidal properties and it is easy to use. In addition to supplementation of the diet with minerals and vitamins beside spraying the stables with diazinon controlled these cases.

Finally, gastrointestinal nematodes infestation can enhance the establishment, survival and pathogenicity of concomitant psoroptic mange infestation. The apparent association between two classes of parasites was due to an interaction between them and the minerals and vitamins deficiency due to gastrointestinal nematodes infestation may increase the susceptibility of sheep to psoroptic mange. There is a clear need for greater recognition and study of concurrent helminthes-skin affection in general and gastrointestinal nematodes-mange infestation in particular.

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