

IDENTIFICATION OF LEISHMANIA MEXICANA MEXICANA IN THE STATE OF SÃO PAULO, BRAZIL

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Until recently, the parasites responsible for human and domestic animal infection related to American cutaneous Leishmaniasis, were regarded as belonging to only one species *Leishmania braziliensis braziliensis* VIANNA, 1911.

However, working at "Vale do Ribeira" in the State of São Paulo — Brazil, where the vector of cutaneous leishmaniasis, as well as human and dog cases are present, we have identified for the first time in this region, four "isolates" of human cases and one of a domestic dog classified as *Leishmania mexicana mexicana* by both biological and biochemical characterization.

When these parasites are inoculated in hamsters, lesions present numerous parasites. They are large in size and the isolates from exuberant histiocytes, grow easily in culture media. The parasites are also adequately distinguished by six enzyme profiles in electrophoresis in agarose: aspartate aminotransferase (E.C.2.6.1.1); alanine aminotransferase (E.C.2.6.1.2.); malate dehydrogenase (E.C.1.1.1.37); glucose-6-phosphate dehydrogenase (E.C.1.1.1.49); Phosphoglucumutase (E.C.2.7.5.1.); and glucose phosphate isomerase (E.C.5.3.1.9).

The biological characterization of these strains allowed us to include them in the "me-

xicana complex", and the biochemical data in the subspecies *Leishmania mexicana mexicana*.

The existence of *L. m. mexicana* in Brazil — both in human cases and a dog — amplified the geographical distribution of this agent in the New World.

RESUMO

Identificação de *Leishmania mexicana mexicana* no Estado de São Paulo — Brasil

Foi identificado pela primeira vez a presença de *L. mexicana mexicana* no Estado de São Paulo — Vale do Ribeira, a partir de casos humanos e de cão doméstico, através da caracterização biológica (*in vivo* e *in vitro*) e bioquímica (enzimas).

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