

[J Commun Dis.](#) 1995 Jun;27(2):84-91.

Epidemiology of diarrhoea in two major cities in Saudi Arabia.

[Milaat WA](#), [Elassouli SM](#).

Community Medicine Department, Faculty of Medicine, King Abdul Aziz University, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

Abstract

The epidemiological pattern of diarrhoeal diseases, causative agents and risk factors of their occurrence in two referral hospitals of Saudi Arabia is presented in this study. Stool specimens from 1726 admitted diarrhoeal cases were examined for parasites, yeast, enteropathogenic bacteria and rotavirus using the ELISA test. 41.3% of cases were due to rotavirus (RVGE) while 53.1% of cases showed no causative pathogens. Mean age of all cases was 20.2 months and RVGE cases showed a steady rise from the neonatal period onward, reaching a peak between 6-14 months. Males accounted for higher percentage of all diarrhoeal cases. Mothers of diarrhoea cases were mostly housewives with low educational level. Bottle fed children showed higher proportion (53.1%) of diarrhoea than other types of feeding suggesting the faeco-oral route of infection and the effect of poor sanitation. A pattern of higher RVGE cases was seen in warmer months in Al-taif and in cooler months in Jeddah. Findings demonstrated the interaction between host, pathogen and environmental factors in the epidemiology of infectious diarrhoeas in developing countries and the areas of possible prevention.

PIP: The epidemiological pattern of diarrheal diseases, causative agents, and risk factors of their occurrence in two referral hospitals of Saudi Arabia is presented in this study. Stool specimens from 1726 admitted diarrheal cases were examined for parasites, yeast, enteropathogenic bacteria, and rotavirus using the ELISA test. 41.3% of cases were due to rotavirus, while 53.1% of cases showed no causative pathogens. Mean age of all cases was 20.2 months and rotavirus gastroenteritis (RVGE) cases showed a steady rise from the neonatal period onward, reaching a peak between 6 and 14 months. Males accounted for a higher percentage of all diarrheal cases. Mothers of diarrheal cases were mostly housewives with low educational status. Bottle-fed children showed higher proportions (53.1%) of diarrhea than children fed otherwise, suggesting the feco-oral route of infection and the effect of poor sanitation. A pattern of higher RVGE cases was seen in warmer months in Al-taif and in cooler months in Jeddah. Findings demonstrated the interaction between host, pathogen, and environmental

factors in the epidemiology of infectious diarrheas in developing countries and the areas of possible prevention. author's modified