

Application of real-time PCR for the differentiation of *Entamoeba histolytica* and *E. dispar* in cyst-positive faecal samples from 130 immigrants living in Spain.

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Abstract

In an effort to improve the diagnosis of intestinal amoebiasis, a real-time PCR has been used for the detection and differentiation of *Entamoeba histolytica* and *E. dispar* infections in African or South American immigrants who live in Spain. Faecal samples from all of the 130 subjects had apparently been found to contain *E. histolytica*/*E. dispar* cysts by microscopical examination. Using the real-time PCR, *E. histolytica* DNA was detected in faecal samples from only 10 (7.7%) of the immigrants, with *E. dispar* DNA detected in the samples from another 117 (90.0%) of the subjects. The use of such PCR in the routine investigation of patients found positive for *E. histolytica*/*E. dispar* cysts (by microscopy) is recommended, especially in non-endemic areas.

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