

Area: Vetores e Ectoparasitos

Pediculosis diagnosis of schoolchildren from Niterói, RJ

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Pediculosis has been considered a disease of great importance for public health, because although it reaches humans of different races, genus, ages and socioeconomic conditions, it presents a higher prevalence among school children and has been, over the years, the leading childhood ectoparasitosis in Brazil and worldwide. Faced with this reality, this study aimed to identify the frequency of pediculosis in students from 1st to 5th year of Elementary School of a Municipal School of Niterói before and after educational intervention. The pediculosis diagnosis protocol was adopted, consisting of the inspection of the head by two distinct techniques: direct visual examination and examination using a louse comb. In both techniques, the hair was first combed with a common comb to disengage and the duration of the inspection was according to the length of the hair being: three minutes for short hair, four minutes for medium hair and five minutes for long hair. The time of each inspection was controlled by a timer. It was considered as short when the height of the end of the ear, as medium that of the height of the ear to the shoulder and long the ones below the height of the shoulder. In direct visual examination, the hair was split with the gloved fingers every 2 cm to search for moving lice near the scalp and nits. In the examination using the louse comb, the hair was combed starting from the middle of the front of the head down to the end of the hair. After each combing, the teeth of the louse comb were observed for live lice and nits. A form was created for each child to record information on: gender, age group, stated race and type of hair. Five units from the 1st to the 5th year of schooling were indicated by the School Unit, totaling 100 students, of whom 45 were authorized by the parents / guardians, by signing the Free and Informed Consent Form, to participate in the diagnosis of pediculosis. The children were invited to go individually to the reserved place and were inspected by two separate evaluators. In the first stage of diagnosis, 45 children were inspected and in 31% (14/45) positivity were detected, being 13 girls and 1 boy. In the second stage of diagnosis of pediculosis, 37/45 children were inspected and in 32.4% (12/37) positivity were detected, all cases being in girls. There was no numerical difference in positivity among the participants after the educational intervention. The results obtained agree with the findings of the literature that indicate greater positivity in female subjects.

Key-words: *Pediculus capitis*, children, diagnosis