

Parasitological analysis of medicinal herbs marketed in the free fairs of the city of Belem, Para, Brazil.

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The fairs and popular markets that exist in Belem are places that concentrate a large part of the Amazonian biodiversity of food importance, medicinal, handicraft and other cultural manifestations. It is in these places that the population seeks the cure of various daily problems, from health to socioeconomic problems. However, the precarious physical structure and lack of hygiene found in the free fairs are the factors that able to interfere in the quality, especially of the herbs, especially those consumed raw, with a particular importance for public health. These herbs are consumed by the population and may contain protozoan cysts, eggs, larvae and helminths, serving as an important route of transmission of intestinal parasites. The aim of this research was to analyze the hygienic-sanitary quality of the main medicinal herbs marketed in the free fairs of Belem. During the period from August 2016 to January 2017, 10 samples of medicinal herbs from two different species, Mastruz (*Chenopodium ambrosioides* L.) and mint (*Mentha*) were collected, due to great use by the population. The samples were collected at the main fairs of Belem (Ver-o-Peso, 25th, Pedreira, Telegraph and Guama) and packed in polyethylene bags, closed and identified. The herbs were stripped and weighed 25g of each species. The samples were divided and submitted to washing with distilled water and analysis procedures. The washing product was gassed and allowed to settle for 24 hours in a conical chalice. About 5 ml of the pellet was removed and one drop was transferred to each slide and stained with lugol and observed under the optical microscope. Each sample generated the preparation of 10 slides. The results showed that of the 10 samples analyzed for identification of endoparasites, 6 presented at least one parasitic infection. In mint, of 50 slides prepared, it was finding 29 slides contaminated with *Schistosoma mansoni*, *Entamoeba's* Eggs, *Balantidium's* Eggs, *Dipidium* Eggs, *Iodomoeba* sp., *Ancylostoma's* eggs and *Himinoleps nana*, *Schistosoma intercalatum*, *Strongyloides*, larva nematoid, *Giardia lamblia's* cysts and *Balantidium* cyst). The *Mastruz* showed lower levels of endoparasits contamination. Of then 50 slides, only 6 showed some parasits agents (*Giardia lamblia's* cysts, *Balantidium's* cysts and *Entamoeba's* cysts). It is evident that the sources of contamination of the herbs are diverse, including the water, type of fertilizers used, transport, packaging and preparation. A protective and effective measure is good hygiene, which would prevent the transmission of endoparasites. In order for there to be a satisfactory sanitary barrier between its consumers, it is necessary that the individual providing it has knowledge for a good preparation and handling of those products. It is concluded that the herbs sold in the fairgrounds of Belem are prominent and a importante fator in the transmission of endoparasites and there is a need for sanitary measures to improve the hygienic quality of these products.

Key-words: Medicinal herbs; endoparasits; Free Fairs