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Short Report

Schistosoma bovis in human stools in Republic of Niger

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We wish to report the presence of eggs of *Schistosoma bovis* in Republic of Niger. This discovery was made during a survey of an *S. mansoni* focus in Gaya area, in the south of the country. The survey involved 4 villages; 1900 people were examined by the MIF stool concentration method. *S. bovis* eggs were found in stools of 17 individuals, all living in Niakoye-Tounga village, which represents a 3.7% prevalence rate in this village. Measurements were made on 47 eggs: the mean length was $222.2 \pm 6 \mu\text{m}$, mean width $53.1 \pm 2.2 \mu\text{m}$ and the mean width $40 \mu\text{m}$ from the end bearing the spine was $17.1 \pm 0.7 \mu\text{m}$. These dimensions, and the general morphology of the eggs, tally with the criteria given for *S. bovis* by PITCHFORD

(1965). Six persons were also infected with *S. mansoni*, 2 with *S. haematobium* and 2 with all 3 species. Six months later, 13 of the 17 infected people, all untreated, were re-examined; 4 were still excreting *S. bovis* eggs and questioning revealed that they had not eaten any food likely to be contaminated by *S. bovis* during the days preceding their examination. Five eggs were isolated and examined; flame cell movements were seen in 3, but hatching could not be obtained. The presence of *S. bovis* in human stools has already been reported in Uganda, Kenya, Zimbabwe, and South Africa (CHUNGE *et al.*, 1986), but not, to our knowledge, in West Africa. Our observations, and those of RAPER (1951), suggest that human infection with *S. bovis* is only slight and transient.

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