nials, but the Resistance to drug is so high in some parts of the world and second-line drugs have not experienced wide spread use due to toxicity and cost. In this study a species-specific mononclonal antibody (mAb) recognize component on surface and culture supernatant of *Leishmania major* (*L. major*). In ELISA and Western blotting this component is species-specific to *L. major* without cross-reactivity with other leishmanias species, *L. donovani*, *L. infantum* and *L. tropica*. Since the mAb, can not reacted with component of medium, it is questionable that the parasite acquire unknown component from the growth medium and/or post translation modification antigens that parasite express on the surface or secrete to medium. We shown that the mAb can disrupt component(s) to parasite surface according to the presence of mAbs in culture medium and un-coated parasite could not induce infection in susceptible BALB/c mice. Immunized mice compare with control groups could not induce infection after challenge with standard stain of *L. major*. In vitro results shown that vaccinated mice induce high level of IFN-gamma, low Parasites load and resistant to *L. major* infection for at least 12 month. These observation explain a novel option that parasite acquire virulence factor as a post-translation modification of antigens.

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**Relationship Between Toxocariasis and Asthma: A Prospective Study Among Peruvian Children**  
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**Background:** The zoonotic ascarid *Toxocara canis* has been suggested as a possible etiologic agent of asthma. We aimed to determine the association between *T. canis* infection and asthma in children seen at the Hospital Nacional Cayetano Heredia, Lima, Peru, and to evaluate other factors associated with *T. canis* infection and asthma in the population studied.

**Methods:** This is a case-control study involving 75 asthmatic and 75 nonasthmatic children, from 2 to 13 years who were evaluated at the Hospital Nacional Cayetano Heredia in 2002. A questionnaire was applied referring to the interest variables. Seroprevalence of *T. canis* was determined through a *T. canis* ELISA IgG test for. Chi-square test, t of Student and logistic regression analysis were used. A p value lower than 0.05 was considered to be statistically significant.

**Results:** The seroprevalence of toxocariasis was 16%. No significant association was found between the seropositivity for *T. canis* and asthma in univariate and multivariate analysis (OR: 1.48; 95% CI 0.56—3.88). Although, there was a significant association between a higher frequency of nocturnal sibilance crises and a positive serology for *T. canis* (p = 0.005). The factors associated to toxocariasis were contact with dogs (p = 0.004), particularly with puppies (p = 0.0017), and parents without university education (p = 0.015). The factors associated to asthma were infrequent contact with dogs (p = 0.046) and parents with a university education (p = 0.012).

**Conclusions:** There was no association between the presence of positive serology for *T. canis* and asthma, but there was an association between a higher frequency of crises of nocturnal sibilance and a positive serology for *T. canis*.

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**Epidemiologic Considerations About Visceral Leishmaniosis in Albania**  

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**Objective:** Aim of this study was to analyze some epidemiologic features of visceral leishmaniosis in children in Albania.

**Materials and methods:** In this study we included 1210 children aged 0—14 years, all admitted and treated for visceral leishmaniosis since 1994—2006 in Infectious Disease Ward Tirana Albania. We studied the distribution of the disease in regard to age, gender, living area, time. Results were shown at the following table.

**Conclusions:** Visceral leishmaniosis is a frequent disease in Albania presented with a considerable number of cases per year. The most affected age group is 1—4 years, male gender more affected, urban areas also are predominant over rural ones.

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**Plasma Levels of Interferon-gamma, Interleukin-10, and Interleukin-12, Before and After Treatment in Visceral Leishmaniasis**  
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**Keywords:** Visceral leishmaniasis; Interleukin; Interferon-γ

**Background:** Various strains of *Leishmania donovani*, *L. infantum* and *L. chagasi* can cause visceral leishmaniasis. Cytokines have a crucial role in the pathogenesis of the disease.

**Objective:** Our purpose was to evaluate the plasma levels of INF-γ, IL-10, and IL-12 in the course of the disease to predict the prognosis of the disease and the proper time to consider the patients as “cured”. Method: Thirty two patients with visceral leishmaniasis were involved in this study. The Plasma levels of IL-10, IL-12 and INF-γ were tittered by Sandwich ELISA method, before treatment, after fever subsided, at discharging the patient from hospital, and two months after treatment. Data were analyzed by Chi-Square method and Non-Parametric Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test.
**Objective:** To detect acute Toxoplasma gondii (T. gondii) infection in early pregnancy Introduction: Acute Toxoplasma gondii (T. gondii) infection in early pregnancy carries the risk of transmitting the infection to the fetus with serious sequelae. However, serological testing for IgG/IgM anti-Toxoplasma antibodies may fail to differentiate between a recent and past infection.

**Methods:** 224 Kuwaiti women in their first trimester were screened for IgG/IgM antibodies by Vitek Immuno Diagnostic Assay System (VIDAS) and VIDAS IgG-avidity tests.

**Results & Discussion:** On serological screening, 119 (53.1%) women were IgG-positive antibodies and 31 (13.8%) for IgM antibodies. Nine of the IgM-positive women had low avidity antibodies. However, IgG avidity test detected low avidity antibodies only in 9 (29%) of the 31 IgM-positive women suggesting a recent infection; and 19 (61.3%) women had high avidity antibodies indicating the infection was acquired in the distant past. Based on IgM serology alone, at least 31 IgM-positive women may have been wrongly labeled with acute Toxoplasma infection thus warranting appropriate therapeutic intervention. All the 19 IgM-positive women with high avidity were confirmed negative for Toxoplasma DNA on PCR analysis. Compared with PCR analysis the VIDAS avidity test was a helpful tool for the diagnosis of recent Toxoplasma infection in IgM-negative women with low-avidity and IgM-positive women with high avidity, specificity >85% to 100% respectively.

**Conclusion:** The VIDAS avidity test when used in combination with VIDAS IgG/IgM tests is a valuable assay for the exclusion of ongoing or recently acquired T. gondii infection in pregnant women in their first trimester and that it decrease significantly the necessity for follow-up testing and unnecessary therapeutic intervention.

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