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The appropriate age to study the incidence of *Helicobacter pylori* infection

La edad adecuada para el estudio de la incidencia de la infección por *Helicobacter pylori*

Dear Editor,

I have read with great interest the study by Troncoso et al., showing that in Santiago, Chile, despite having a significant percentage of *Helicobacter pylori (H. pylori)*-infected mothers (40%), no newborn was infected at the third month of life.[1] It is known that *H. pylori* infection is acquired in the preschool age group, with the associated effects of family size, clustering in families, high infection rate accompanying low socioeconomic status and education,[2] and that the risk declines rapidly after 5 years of age.[3] The striking results obtained by Troncoso *et al*. add another piece of knowledge establishing that such risk increases in the period between 3 months and 5 years. These crucial data can lead to explain in depth both the true age of *H. pylori* infection and the possible mode of transmission of the organism. In fact, a consequence of this study is the possibility to devise intervention strategies to prevent the infection, especially in country with high rate of gastric benign and malignant diseases caused by the bacterium.[4] This is more evident considering the therapeutic difficulties due to the increasing rates of *H. pylori*-resistance to antimicrobials.[5]

Ethical disclosures

Protection of human and animal subjects. The authors declare that no experiments were performed on humans or animals for this study.

Confidentiality of data. The authors declare that no patient data appear in this article.

Right to privacy and informed consent. The authors declare that no patient data appear in this article.

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