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THE ROLE OF DOGS IN THE CONTAMINATION OF PUBLIC SURFACES IN BELGRADE WITH GIARDIA INTESTINALIS

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Pets, especially dogs, play a significant role in the lives of modern people in urban environments. Alienation, stress, and other factors that burden the city man are often overcome psychologically by acquiring a dog that, with its affection, represents excellent psychotherapy. Unfortunately, in addition to this favorable influence, the presence of dogs in urban areas has its other side. In the urban environment, green areas and parks are the main places where children play and they represent resting places for city people, but they are also places where dog owners take their pets out. During their stay on these surfaces, they constantly contaminate them with their feces, which, in addition to the unpleasant smell, also present an epidemiological danger because dogs are carriers of many zoonotic parasites, including protozoa *Giardia intestinalis*.

It is a zoonotic flagellate that occurs in the form of a vegetative form that is pear-shaped with 8 flagella or a cystic form that is egg-shaped. *Giardia* cysts survive well in the external environment and only a small number of cysts are needed to cause infection, either through contact with an infected animal (sniffing and coprophagia in dogs) or through contaminated food and water. After the cyst enters the digestive tract, the vegetative forms of *giardia* are released, which will remain on the surface of the intestinal villi, multiply and, after a certain time, become encysted. Parasites live in the duodenum and can also reach the liver and bile ducts. In dogs, giardiasis is accompanied by long-term diarrhea with extremely unpleasant-smelling excrement that contains slime and has the appearance and color of clay. In order to examine the infection of dogs and the pollution of public areas in Belgrade, in 2021, an examination of 74 soil samples from public areas and 210 samples of dog excrement collected from public areas and by veterinarians from clinics from dogs that had clinical symptoms indicating this parasitosis.



THE ROLE OF DOGS IN THE CONTAMINATION OF PUBLIC SURFACES IN BELGRADE WITH GIARDIA INTESTINALIS

Examinations of soil and feces were performed using the flotation method, while 82 samples of feces were examined in clinics with the IDEXX Snap Giardia test. During these inspections, 15.62% of the land sample was contaminated with giardia, and the inspection of the dogs revealed infection in 45.78%.

The presence of infected dogs (and people) contaminating public areas with their excrement creates the conditions for the spread of giardiasis and the permanent possibility of infection of dogs and people in urban areas.

ULOGA PASA U KONTAMINACIJI JAVNIH POVRŠINA BEOGRADA SA GIARDIA INTESTINALIS

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Životinje ljubimci, a posebno psi imaju značajnu ulogu u životu savremenih ljudi u gradskom okruženju. Otudjenost, stres, i ostali faktori koji opterećuju gradskog čoveka često se psihički prevazilaze nabavkom psa koji svojom privrženosti predstavlja odličnu psihoterapiju. Nažalost pored ovako povoljnog uticaja, prisustvo pasa u urbanim sredinama ima i svoju drugu stranu.

U urbanoj sredini zelene površine i parkovi su glavna mesta na kome se igraju deca i ona predstavljaju odmorišta gradskih ljudi, ali takođe su i mesta na kojima vlasnici pasa izvode svoje ljubimce. Tokom boravka na ovim površinama oni ih stalno kontaminiraju svojim fecesom, koji osim neprijatnog mirisa predstavlja i epidemiološku opasnost jer su psi nosioci mnoštva zoonotski parazita uključujući protozoe *Giardia intestinalis*.

To je zoonotska flagelata koja se javlja u vidu vegetativnog oblika koji je kruškolikog izgleda sa 8 bičiča ili cističnog koji je jajastog oblika. Ciste giardija dobro opstaju u spoljašnjoj sredini i potreban je samo mali broj cisti da uzrokuju infekciju, bilo kontaktom sa zaraženom životinjom (njuškanje i koprofagija kod pasa) ili zagađenom hranom i vodom. Nakon ulaska cisti u digestivni trakt, oslobađaju se vegetativni oblici giardija koji će se zadržavati na površini crevnih resica, razmnožiti se i posle određenog vremena, encistirati. Paraziti žive u duodenumu a mogu dospeti i u jetru i žucne puteve. Kod pasa je giardia praćena dugotrajnim diarejama sa izmetom izuzetno neprijatnog mirisa koji sadrži primese slizi i ima izgled i boju gline. Da bi se ispitala inficiranost pasa i zagađenost javnih površina u Beogradu je tokom 2021 izvršen pregled 74 uzorka zemljišta sa javnih površina i 210 uzoraka izmeta pasa prikupljenih sa javnih površina i od strane veterinara iz ambulanti od pasa koji su imali kliničke simptome koji su ukazivali na ovu parazitozu.



ULOGA PASA U KONTAMINACIJI JAVNIH POVRŠINA BEOGRADA SA GIARDIA INTESTINALIS

Pregledi zemljišta i fecesa su rađeni primenom flotacione metode dok je 82 uzorka fecesa pregledano u ambulantama i sa IDEXX Snap Giardia testom. Tokom ovih pregleda 15.62% uzorka zemljišta je bilo kontaminirano giardijom a pregledom pasa infekcija je ustanovljena u 45.78%. Prisustvom inficiranih pasa (i ljudi) koji svojim izmetom kontaminiraju javne površine sticu se uslovi za širenje dardijaze i permanentnu mogućnost infekcije pasa i ljudi u urbanim sredinama.

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