

Evidence to support the zoonotic transmission of *Giardia* is very strong, but how frequent such transmission occurs and under what circumstances, has yet to be determined.

*Giardia* cysts are remarkably stable, can survive for weeks to months in the environment. Further, the infective dose is low and even a single cyst can cause infection (20), we should be aware that feline giardiasis could be transmitted to humans and most of the people does not know the modes of transmission to humans. Further studies are required in different endemic foci in order to determine the frequency of such transmission. It is possible that domestic cats be a potential source of environmental contamination. A greater awareness of parasite contamination of the environment and its impact on health has precipitated the development of better detection method (21).

### Acknowledgements

We are grateful to S Farnia, Z Babaei, F Tarighi, A Rahimi; Department of Medical Parasitology and Mycology, School of Public Health and Institute of Public Health Research, Tehran University of Medical Sciences, for their kindly support.

### References

1. Adam RD (2001). Biology of *Giardia lamblia*. *Clin Microbiol Rev*, 14: 447-75.
2. Astiazaran-Garcia H, Epinoza-Cantellano M, Castanon G, Chavez-Mungia B, Martinez-Plomo A (2000). *Giardia lamblia*: effect of infection with symptomatic and asymptomatic isolates on the growth of gerbils (*Meriones unguiculatus*). *Exp Parasitol*, 94: 128-135.
3. Thompson RCA, Hopkins RA, Homan WL (2000). Nomenclature and genetic groupings of *Giardia* infecting mammals. *Parasitology Today*, 16: 70-8.
4. World Health Organization (1996). The World Health Report, *World Health Organization*, Geneva.
5. Farthing MJG (1995). *Giardia lamblia*. In: *Infections of the gastrointestinal tract*. Eds, MJ Blaser, PD Smith, JI Ravdin, HB Green berg and RL Guerrant, New York, Raven Press, pp.: 1081-106.
6. Marshall MM, Naumovitz D, Ortega Y, Sterling CR (1997). Waterborne protozoan pathogens. *Clin Microbiol Rev*, 10: 67-85.
7. Graczyk TK, Grimes BH, Knight R (2003). Detection of *Cryptosporidium parvum* and *Giardia lamblia* carried by synanthropic flies by combined fluorescent in situ hybridization and a monoclonal antibody. *Am J Trop Med Hyg*, 68:228-32.
8. Filice FP (1952). Studies on the cytology and life history of a *Giardia* from the laboratory rat. *Univ California Publ*, 57: 53-146.
9. Monis PT, Mayrhofer G, Andrews RH, Homan WL, Limper L, EY PL (1996). Molecular genetic analysis of *Giardia intestinalis* isolates at the glutamate dehydrogenase locus. *Parasitol J*, 112: 1-12.
10. McGlade TR, Robertson ID, Elliott AD, Thompson RCA (2003). High Prevalence of *Giardia* detected in cats by PCR. *Vet Parasitol*, 110: 197-205.
11. Nutter FB, Dubey JP, Levine JF, Breitschwerdt EB, Ford RB, Stoskop MK (2004). Seroprevalences of antibodies against *Bartonella henselae* and *Toxoplasma gondii* and fecal shedding of *Cryptosporidium* spp., *Giardia* spp, and *Toxocara cati* in feral and pet domestic cats. *J Am Vet Med Assoc*, 225(9): 1394-98.
12. Anwar M (1974). Incidence of *Giardia cati* in the stray cats in the Tehran area. *Vet Fac Univ Tehran Iran*, 30: 3.
13. Robben SR, Nobel WE, Doper D, Hendriks WM, Boersema JH, Fransen F, Eysker ME (2004). Infections with helminth and/or protozoa in cats in animal shelters in the Netherlands. *Tijdscher Diergeneeskd*, 129: 2-6.