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Guidelines to Authors
Parental History of Ulcer and the Prevalence of *Helicobacter pylori* Infection in their Offspring

Dear editor,

*Helicobacter pylori* infection is present in almost all patients with duodenal ulcers and gastric ulcers.\(^1\) The pathogenic role of *H. pylori* in peptic ulcer disease is well known. Up to 95% of patients with duodenal ulcers, and 80% of patients with gastric ulcers suffer from this infection.\(^2\) The present study was carried out in the population of south India, which is considered the population at high risk of stomach cancer.\(^3\) We assessed the relationship between subjects with a history of gastric or duodenal ulcer and the risk of infection in their offsprings with the help of PCR assay targeting the 16S rRNA gene. The 16S rRNA gene is a highly specific target for amplification and has been previously of help in reclassifying the organism.\(^4\)

Another scientist demonstrated the specificity of unique *H. pylori* gene primer in identifying the organism in paraffin-embedded gastric biopsy specimen.

The subjects referred to for upper gastrointestinal endoscopy at Deccan College of Medical Sciences and Research Center, Hyderabad, were interviewed about their mother or father who had been referred for endoscopy with the same symptoms or any history of ulcer. The questionnaire sought details on risk factors for *H. pylori* infection, such as housing conditions, family demographics and socioeconomic factors. By 16S rRNA amplification, the status of *H. pylori* was confirmed. A total of 160 subjects were enrolled in the study, of which 70 subjects reported a parental history (mother or father) of ulcer, and 90 were without any history of ulcer. Of a total of 70 subjects, 62.9% were negative and 37.1% were positive (10 and 60, respectively). In those with no family history of ulcer, the prevalence of *H. pylori* was 80% and 20% *H. pylori* negative (72 and 18, respectively, of 90). The results propose the hypotheses that the transmission of *H. pylori* may be influenced by the presence of ulcer or that *H. pylori* strains causing peptic ulcer may be more infective than other strains as published in earlier studies.\(^5\) This may be because of the relation between a history of ulcer and *H. pylori* infection in his or her family or due to common environmental or genetic factors that influence susceptibility to infection. In addition, the high prevalence of *H. pylori* infection in subjects with no family history of ulcer suggests how the living conditions, socioeconomic factors and cultural background of the subjects are important in mounting the prevalence and transmission of *H. pylori* infection.

References


*KS Ahmed, AA Khan, JD Ahi, CM Habibullah Centre for Liver Research and Diagnostics (KSA, AAK, CMH), Kanchanbagh, Hyderabad - 500076, India; and Dr Hari Singh Gour University (KSA, JDA), Sagar, Madhya Pradesh - 470 003, India

*Corresponding author (email: <khajashakeel@gmail.com>)

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