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HUMAN SKIN MYIASIS BY GASTEROPHILUS INTESTINALIS (DE GEER)
(DIPTERA: GASTEROPHILIDAE) IN UMBRIA, CENTRAL ITALY

M. Principato, J. Azzopardi, V. Cuteri

Istituto di Parassitologia, Facoltà di Medicina Veterinaria, Perugia, Italy
1 Istituto di Malattie Infettive, Facoltà di Medicina Veterinaria, Perugia, Italy.

The oral and gastric myiasis in horses by Gasterophilus intestinalis is, in
Umbria, the most frequent parasitosis of those caused by the other four
Gasterophilus species we have recorded in this region. The infestation
occurs in the 96% of half-free-ranging horses, with a parasitic charging
potential that, already in February, reaches N. 450 larvae in the host’s stomach.
Reported herein for the first time in Umbria are three cases of human skin
myiasis caused by G. intestinalis first instar larvae, recorded in 1994 and in
1995, from the end of October to mid-November, in people who had ridden
horses still infested by Gasterophilus eggs. The initial stage of the parasitosis
was characterized by the formation of a very itching tiny blister leading to
scratching. Then a well visible small channel formed, followed by painful
swelling and a suppurative process by Streptococcus pyogenes. The result
was an open lesion, out of which blood serum and pus leaked. The most
affected areas (with 7/10 larval attacks) were the thighs, the calves and the
pelvis. Lesions on the arms were rare. The recovery was obtained after
squeezing lesions up to the complete removal of parasites (dead) and after
giving Tetracycline. We think that, from an epidemiological point of view, the
period October/November is a particularly dangerous moment, since those
Gasterophilus larvae that could not reach the host are led to do an extreme
attempt of adapting themselves by penetrating any host within their range.