

ABSTRACT

Protein-losing Enteropathy and Trichuriasis.

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The study explored the theory that protein-losing enteropathy is a pathogenic pathway that leads to malnutrition and stunting in children affected by chronic *Trichuris* Dysentery Syndrome.

Protein-losing enteropathy was assessed in children infected with *Trichuris trichiura*, and also in children free from any gastrointestinal infections and otherwise clinically sound. The magnitude of protein loss was compared between the two groups. The faecal clearance of alpha-1-antitrypsin (α_1 -AT) was the method employed to assess enteric protein loss.

The results of the study showed what had not been previously proven: moderate as well as severe infection with *T. trichiura* does result in protein-losing enteropathy. Protein loss in the infected children was five times greater than in the non-infected children. In addition, co-existing infections with at least one other gastrointestinal nematode, *Ascaris lumbricoides*, does not seem to exacerbate protein loss in infected individuals.

The possibility of quantifying the amount of plasma cleared daily, means that the amount of essential nutrients lost daily, particularly protein, can be determined.