Etiology of chronic diarrhea

To the Editor

I read with interest the manuscript entitled "Etiology of chronic diarrhea" by Dr. Sabeha M. Al-Bayatti in Saudi Med J. Surprisingly, ulcerative colitis headed the list (28%) while intestinal amebiasis constituted only 10% of cases, in country blockaded of the last 12 years with strict sanctions imposed on it. Infective causes surely and currently head the list of causes. The patients in this study had only one general stool examination, and failure to demonstrate a pathogen on stool examination does not exclude its presence. Three repeated general stool examinations are required. Serological tests for amebiasis were not performed. They are of high specificity and sensitivity. Examining a fresh stool specimen is much more likely to yield trophozoites of Entameba histololical examination of a co-lo-rectal mucosal biopsy. Regarding the histopathological diagnosis of ulcerative colitis, the author did not mention these changes, and the histopathological criteria upon which ulcerative colitis was diagnosed. This is due to the microscopical changes of acute self limited colitis of acute infectious type may be indistinguishable from those of early ulcerative colitis. There is evidence that at least some patients diagnosed as having ulcerative colitis who never relapse are instances of infective colitis.

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Reply from the Author

Author declined to reply.

References