

MEETING ABSTRACT

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Lactose intolerance at a day care center in the municipality of Duque de Caxias, Rio de Janeiro, Brasil

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Objectives and study

Lactose intolerance has a variable prevalence in different parts of the world. The differences may be explained by the diverse eating habits of each population, allowing over the years a selection of individuals with and without the ability to digest lactose – ontogenetic variation. The objective of this study is to identify the prevalence of lactose intolerance and their presenting main symptoms, developed by children at a Day care center in the municipality of Duque de Caxias, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, after an oral lactose tolerance test.

Methods

Oral lactose tolerance test was done in all children at the daycare center. At the end of the test a questionnaire was held to identify symptoms. A hundred children were analyzed (61% male and 39% female), between 2 and 13 years (30% from 2 to 4 years; 37% from 5 to 7 years; 24% from 8 to 10 years; and 9% from 11 to 13 years).

Results

The blood test showed 52% of the children with positive results for lactose intolerance and 48% were negative. From the questionnaires answers were gotten in 64% of the patients. Lactose intolerance (positive test with symptoms) was present in 20.3% of the samples. Inconclusive results (positive test without symptoms and negative test with symptoms) reached 42.2% of the samples. Healthy patients represent 37.5% of the studied population. Among the symptoms, diarrhea was the most prevalent (50%), followed by abdominal pain and headache (20%), and flatus/abdominal distension (5%).

Children between 5 and 7 years were the more symptomatic.

Conclusion

Lactose intolerance was present and frequent among children at the evaluated Day care center. The significant prevalence of this disease makes indispensable the referral to a Gastroenterology Unit all patients under the suspicious of lactose intolerance, to get the proper diagnosis and treatment as well as the proper diet orientation.

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