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ORIGINAL TITLE	Nematode infection of laboratory animals which show non specific serological cross reactivity with filarial antigens
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MAIN HEADING	NEMATODE INFECTIONS
ABSTRACT	<p>Phenomena such as antigenic cross reactivity, antigenic competition, immune tolerance and enhancement, complicate nematode serology greatly. Sera of laboratory animals, for example the rabbit (<i>Oryctolagus cuniculus</i>) are used in serological procedures. An infection in the laboratory animal used for serological studies complicates the interpretation of the findings. A survey of the faeces of 121 rabbits in 5 locations were carried out to detect intestinal nematode parasites, and revealed twenty five (20.7per cent) of the rabbits to be infected. Four different methods of faecal examination were used, viz Direct Smear Technique (D.S.T.), Kato Thick Smear Technique (K.T.S.T.), Zinc Sulphate Centrifugal Floatation Technique (Z.S.C.F.T.) and the Faecal Culture Technique (F.C.T.), and the most efficient were found to be the Zinc Sulphate Centrifugal Floatation Technique (Z.S.C.F.T.) and the Faecal Culture Technique (F.C.T.). A nematode parasite <i>Heligonella indica</i> (Singh, 1969) was found in the duodenum of an infected rabbit. This finding constitutes a new host record as <i>H. indica</i> has not been previously reported from the rabbit (<i>Oryctolagus cuniculus</i>). The morphology of this parasite and its larval stages obtained by faecal culture technique were studied. Experimental reinfection of non infected rabbits with larvae obtained by faecal culture proved successful. Adult worms were not recovered at post mortem examination though eggs were present in the faeces. Serological studies using enzyme linked immunosobent assay (ELISA) on the sera of non infected rabbits, naturally and experimentally infected rabbits with <i>H. indica</i> antigen, SD2-4 antigen and sera from <i>Wuchereria bancrofti</i> infected patients showed the presence of an antigenic cross reactivity between the parasite <i>Heligrnonella indica</i> and the filarial worms, viz, <i>W. bancrofti</i> and <i>Setaria digitata</i>.</p>