

**DETECTION OF *Leishmania chagasi* AND *Leishmania braziliensis* BY PCR TEST IN DOGS FROM THE ATLANTIC RAINFOREST REGION OF PERNAMBUCO, BRAZIL.**

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Visceral leishmaniasis caused by *Leishmania chagasi* is found throughout the South American continent. Dogs are considered the main reservoir host. Several studies have also reported some cases of cutaneous leishmaniasis (CL) in dogs, providing further evidence of their suspect role as reservoir involved in the zoonotic cycle of CL related to *L. braziliensis*. The proposal of this study was to verify the prevalence of *L. braziliensis* and *L. chagasi* infection by PCR in blood and bone marrow samples in endemic area of Pernambuco. 35 dogs of two localities were studied. In Mundo Novo 11 samples of blood and bone marrow were tested, with 1 was positive for *L. chagasi* and 1 for *L. braziliensis*, respectively. In Mirim locality, of the 24 samples of blood 1 was positive for *L. chagasi* and 22 of bone marrow were negative. The PCR test showed to be more sensitive to samples of blood, and it can be explained by the insufficient amount of bone marrow due difficulties in the samples collection. Is important the incorporation of biomechemical and molecular methods for the correct identification of circulating aetiological agents and the consequent reassessment of control and epidemiological surveillance measures.

Keywords: *L. chagasi*, *L. braziliensis*, PCR, dogs

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