

Epidemiologic patterns of acute diarrhea and endemic shigella infections in children in a poor periurban setting in Santiago, Chile

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To prepare a field site for evaluating preventive interventions against endemic shigellosis, the authors followed prospectively a cohort of 360 children (90 each of children aged 0-11, 12-23, 24-35, and 36-47 months) in Santa Julia, a low socioeconomic area in Santiago, Chile, from November 1986 through April 1989 with twice weekly household visits for diarrheal disease; infants replaced children who reached 60 months of age. Coprocultures on 2 consecutive days from children with diarrhea and from age-matched controls within the cohort were cultured for *Shigella*. Bacteriologic surveillance was also maintained in the health center and children's hospital serving Santa Julia. In this community, where all households had access to potable water (68% inside) and all but 3% had access to a toilet, but where there was marked crowding, the overall incidence of diarrheal disease in the cohort was low (2.26 episodes/12 child months of observation in children aged 0-11 months and 2.09 in those age