

Enterohemorrhagic *Escherichia coli* associated with hemolytic-uremic syndrome in Chilean children

Cordovez,

Prado,

Maggi,

Cordero,

Martinez,

Misraji,

Rios,

Soza,

Ojeda,

Levine,

A clinicoepidemiological study was undertaken to determine if enterohemorrhagic *Escherichia coli* (EHEC) was associated with hemolytic-uremic syndrome (HUS) in children in Santiago, Valdivia, and Temuco, Chile. Prospective surveillance detected 20 hospitalized cases of HUS in children less than 4 years of age in these cities from March 1988 to March 1989. Each HUS patient was matched (by sex and age) with two control children (hospitalized elective-surgery patients). To detect EHEC, DNA from stool culture isolates of *E. coli* was detected by hybridization with biotin-labelled DNA probes specific for the EHEC virulence plasmid, Shiga-like toxin I (SLT-I) or SLT-II. Stool cultures from 6 of 20 cases (30%) and from 2 of 38 controls (5.3%) yielded EHEC ($P = 0.0158$). EHEC isolates from all HUS cases hybridized with the EHEC plasmid probe and with probes for SLT-I or -II (or both). The serogroups of the isolates included O157, O26, and O111. EHEC causes HUS in Chile, and the biotinylated gen