

## Correspondence

The Editor,  
Prof. A.A. Sandosham,  
Medical Journal of Malaya.

Dear Sir,

In our paper (Bisseru and Abdul Aziz, 1970) we reported our findings on the intestinal parasitic infections of school-children in the various communities. We did not then recommend a drug for mass therapy.

Subsequently, I have used Pyrantel pamoate in the form of 'Combantrin' (Pfizer) for the treatment of multiple parasitic infections over the last few months in children and adults in rural areas in Selangor State, Malaysia. I have found my results extremely encouraging, 'Combantrin' being highly effective against *Ascaris lumbricoides* (roundworm), hookworms (*Necator americanus* is the predominant species in Malaysia), and *Enterobius vermicularis* (pinworms or threadworms).

Field studies at the Montfort Boys' Home, Batu Tiga, Selangor have shown 84.5% (49 out of a total of 58) boys examined were found to carry one or more intestinal helminth. Of these 49, 33 were available for treatment with 'Combantrin' at a single dose of four tablets each of 125 mg. active base. A repeat stool test was carried out two weeks after the treatment.

In ten of the 11 boys with *Ascaris* infection, no eggs of the parasite were seen in the stool post-treatment, i.e., a "cure-rate" of the patent infection of 90.9%. Similarly, of the 11 boys with hookworm, no ova of this parasite were seen in the stool of ten boys, i.e., again a "cure-rate" of the present patent infection of 90.9%. Stool tests revealed three cases of *Enterobius* infection and the post-treatment picture

should show a cure of this patent infection.

In 21 boys with scanty *Trichuris* infection (eggs less than 200/grm faeces) which was the commonest parasite seen, no eggs were detected in the stools of 12 (57%). While there was very significant egg reduction in the remainder (43%), all these being boys harboured very scanty infections, namely less than 80 eggs per gram of faeces.

Further outpatient field trials in progress on about 300 children and adults on two rubber and oil palm estates have been extremely encouraging. Similar results have been found on in-patients at the Gombak Hospital, Selangor. I have so far found no side-effects following the use of this drug and it could therefore be used where no medical personnel are available for supervision. It is suitable for mass therapy as it is a single dose treatment; an elixir is available for paediatric use.

Work has been carried out with 'Combantrin' in Taiwan (Hsieh and Chen, 1970) with equally promising results and insignificant side-effects.

Yours sincerely,

(Professor B. Bisseru)  
Head  
Department of Parasitology

### Reference

1. Bisseru, B. and Abdul Aziz bin Ahmad (1970). Intestinal parasites, eosinophilia, haemoglobin and gamma globulin of Malay, Chinese and Indian schoolchildren. *Med. J. Malaya*, 25, 29.
2. Hsien-Chen Hsieh and Eng-rin Chen (1970). Evaluation of anthelmintic activity of Pyrantel Pamoate (Combantrin) against *Ascaris* and hookworm. *Chinese Jnl. of Microbiology*, 3, 126-131.