

SCHISTOSOMIASIS

This disease affects the liver, central nervous system, and other organs where eggs of *Schistosoma japonicum* get lodged, causing granuloma formation. Manifestation of the disease depends on the species a person is infected with. It is acquired mostly through personal habits and livelihood requiring contact with schisto-infested waters.

Cause

A blood fluke (parasite) called *Schistosoma japonicum* in the Philippines

Mode of Transmission

Transmitted through a tiny freshwater snail (*Oncomelania hupensis quadrasi*)

Signs and Symptoms

- Abdominal pain
- Low-grade fever
- Loose bowel movement
- Bloody stool
- Inflammation of the liver
- Bulging of the abdomen
- Enlargement of the spleen
- Complications in various organ systems caused by chronic schistosomiasis (for example, gastrointestinal system, heart, liver, brain)

Diagnostic Method

- Stool examination through Kato Katz method
- Serologic test: COPT (circumoval precipitin tests) and ELISA (enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay)

Treatment

- Prognosis: curable at the early stage but fatal in the advanced stage
- Drug of choice: Praziquantel tablets available for free at the Schistosomiasis Control Teams (SCTs) or health centers

Prevention and Control

- Submit stool for examination to the SCT or health center.
- Construct and use sanitary toilets.
- Avoid contact or exposing oneself to schisto-infested waters.
- Fence off or tie stray animals.
- Keep environment clean and participate in community efforts to control disease.
- Consult SCTs or health centers for additional information.