

## THE EFFECT OF BREAST-FEEDING ON CRYPTOSPORIDIUM INFECTION RATE IN CHILDREN BELOW TWO YEARS AGE

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### ABSTRACT

*Cryptosporidium* spp. is a coccidian protozoan parasite that is now well recognized as a worldwide cause of diarrhea. Current study involved of 200 stool samples collected from children, who were hospitalized because of diarrhea. The direct smear method and then formalin-ether sedimentation were carried out to detect the intestinal parasites. Fecal smears were prepared from the sediment and stained by the modified Ziehl-Neelsen method for the recovery of acid-fast oocysts of *Cryptosporidium*. The study results showed that 18% of the hospitalized diarrreal children were infected with *Cryptosporidium* infection. The rate of infection in children who have breast-fed and mixed were low compared to children who have bottle-feeding the highest rate of infection in children were in the first three months of age, and the male more than female in the infection rate. It is concluded that the breast-feeding was demonstrated to reduce *Cryptosporidium* diarrhea in children and should be encouraged.

**KEYWORDS:** Breast Feeding Importance, Infection Rate for Children Below Two Year