

**TREATMENT WITH BENZNIDAZOLE IN ASSOCIATION WITH IMMUNOSUPPRESSIVE DRUGS IN MICE CHRONICALLY INFECTED WITH *TRYPANOSOMA CRUZI* : INVESTIGATION ON THE POSSIBILITY OF DEVELOPMENT OF NEOPLASIAS.** Sonia G. Andrade, Igor Marcelo Oliveira Mesquita , Jamile F. Jambreiro , Isis F. Magalhães Santos, Renata Siqueira Portella Centro de Pesquisas Gonçalo Moniz/Fiocruz, Laboratório de Doença de Chagas Experimental. Salvador, Bahia

**Introduction:** Benznidazole is recommended for the treatment of *Trypanosoma cruzi* infection in acute and early chronic phases of Chagas disease in Brazil. Observations by others have indicated a higher incidence of neoplasias in immunosuppressed patients, presenting Chagas disease reactivation, submitted to treatment with Benznidazole. **Objectives:** In the present study, we investigated if there is a potentialization of lymphomas generation in mice chronically infected, treated with immunosuppressive drugs and Benznidazole. **Methods:** For this, 142 Swiss mice chronically infected with the 21 SF strain of *T. cruzi* and 72 normal Swiss mice were used. Both infected and normal mice were divided into experimental groups submitted to different schedules of treatment: with Benznidazole alone; with immunosuppressive drugs (azathioprine, betametasona and cyclosporine); with a combination of immunosuppressive drugs and Benznidazole and untreated controls. **Results and conclusions:** In the group infected and treated with Benznidazole, one mice (1/31) developed a non-Hodgkins' lymphoma. This finding has been interpreted as a spontaneous tumor of mice. The study of the chronically infected mice treated with the combination of immunosuppressive drugs and Benznidazole demonstrated absence of lymphomas or other neoplasias. These findings support the indication of Benznidazole, as the drug of choice, to immunosuppressed patients that develop a reactivation of Chagas disease.