

Publication

Asian schistosomiasis : current status and prospects for control leading to elimination

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Schistosomiasis is an infectious disease caused by helminth parasites of the genus *Schistosoma*. World-wide, an estimated 250 million people are infected with these parasites with the majority of cases occurring in sub-Saharan Africa. Within Asia, three species of *Schistosoma* cause disease. *Schistosoma japonicum* is the most prevalent, followed by *S. mekongi* and *S. malayensis*. All three species are zoonotic, which causes concern for their control, as successful elimination not only requires management of the human definitive host, but also the animal reservoir hosts. With regard to Asian schistosomiasis, most of the published research has focused on *S. japonicum* with comparatively little attention paid to *S. mekongi* and even less focus on *S. malayensis*. In this review, we examine the three Asian schistosomes and their current status in their endemic countries: Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, and Thailand (*S. mekongi*); Malaysia (*S. malayensis*); and Indonesia, People's Republic of China, and the Philippines (*S. japonicum*). Prospects for control that could potentially lead to elimination are highlighted as these can inform researchers and disease control managers in other schistosomiasis-endemic areas, particularly in Africa and the Americas.

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