

## **Molecular data on vectors and reservoir hosts of zoonotic cutaneous leishmaniasis in central Iran**

Due to the increasing number of positive cases of cutaneous leishmaniasis with occurrence of new foci, a study was carried out to investigate on vectors and reservoirs of the disease in the Shahrood district, central Iran during ۲۰۰۵-۲۰۰۶. Sandflies and rodents were collected using sticky papers and Sherman live traps respectively. More than ۱۷۰۰ sandflies were collected and identified, mainly *Phlebotomus papatasi* species. RAPD-PCR analysis of sandflies showed that ۱۰% of *P. papatasi* and ۴.۲% of *P. caucasicus* were naturally infected with *Leishmania major*. Two species of rodents, potential reservoirs, *Rhombomys opimus* (۹۲.۵%) and *Nesokia indica* (۷.۵%) were trapped in the district. Microscopy identification from rodents confirmed that ۹۱.۹% of the *Rhombomys opimus* were positive to amastigotes. Species identification of isolated parasites revealed *Leishmania major* DNA in the infected *Rhombomys* using RAPD-PCR technique. This epidemiological data highlight the importance of the disease in the region and could help people involved in control programs.