

PET Oct 08 - MR08



Group: Proyecto de Espeleologia de Tulum, PET, <http://www.baue.org/projects/PET/>. The group does exploration of underwater caves in the Yucatan Peninsula. The main team is composed of 3 divers, with an extended team of 4 more divers.

Location: Yucatan Peninsula, Q. Roo state, Mexico. Exploration of the Aktun-Hu Cave system. The cave location is about 8km from the coast in a dense jungle location. The area is well known for leishmaniasis infection and the high season is from Oct-March when the days are shorter and cooler. Project activities do not involve over-night camping at the site. The excursions are day trips from 7am to 6pm.

Past-experience: Although the area is well known for leishmaniasis the core team did not have much experience with this condition.

The first member (Diver A) got infected in Nov 07 and the first sign appeared in Feb 08. The infection was on the right elbow and it was finally treated with oral antifungal (itraconazole). There was a long period of time from the moment the ulcer developed to the time the condition was recognized (3 months) and treatment started. This team member was using DEEP/REI Jungle juice twice per day during 07-08 excursions.

A second team member (Diver B) got infected in May 08 on his upper leg. Due to the first member's experience the team was vigilant to skin ulcers so this was detected very early. The team members received local treatment using the milk of a special plant following a recommendation from a local woman that treats this condition in the local town. The ulcer cured after about 1 month with 2 treatments. This team member did not use any repellent.

The third member of the core team has not been infected. He is a local resident of the area and might have more immunity to the condition than the other two that travel to the area for the projects, 2 or 3 times per year.

Of the extended team members none of them have been infected.

Experience with MR-08



During Oct 08 the team conducted another project. We were able to get samples of MR-08 to use for the project. Diver A and B used this samples everyday during the 7 days project. Other team members use it less regular during the project. Diver A and B had a combination of protection methods. 1) Clothing treated with Permethrin, application of MR-08 in the morning, and use of mosquito net for the head when condition allow due to heat.

MR-08 was applied to arms, face and upper torso after morning bath. MR-08 felt refreshing on the skin and had no uncomfortable effect. It was very easy to applied and to carry around.

There were not reported infections during late 08 or 09.

During May 09 the team conducted another project. Due to the low season for infection the only precaution that was taken was clothing treated with Permethrin.

As the team prepares for another project during high season similar protection strategies than during Oct 08 are planned: treated clothing, MR-08, and mosquito nets for head when possible.