A thorough clinical study was carried out on 100 patients of acute diarrhea. The 100 patients studied comprised of 82 cases of bacterial/viral diarrhea, 5 cases of giardiasis, 3 cases of amoebiasis, 5 cases of idiopathic inflammatory bowel disease, one case of carcinoma rectum and four cases remained unclassified. The commonest cause of acute diarrhea was found to be due to bacterial/viral etiology. All the patients in this group of bacterial/viral diarrhea had a short duration of diarrhea with clinical symptoms of infective illness. It is not always possible to isolate the infective organism in these patients and reliance was made on sigmoidoscopy and histopathological changes on rectal biopsy to impart this diagnosis. Majority of patients showed rectal biopsy feature typical of infective proctitis and repeat biopsies in selected patients showed market improvement to complete resolution of infective changes. A good collection was, henceforth established between the clinical features and rectal biopsy changes in patients of bacterial/viral diarrhea. Acute diarrhea was the initial clinical presentation in patients of idiopathic inflammatory bowel disease. Sigmoidoscopic examination revealed diffuse changes of proctocolitis in all these patients. Rectal biopsy was found abnormal in all the five patients and showed features suggestive of this diagnosis, but persistence of histopathological changes on repeat rectal biopsy was essential for imparting the diagnosis of idiopathic inflammatory bowel disease. The clinical features at the initial presentation in these patients did not correlate well with the final diagnosis and rectal biopsy changes were helpful, otherwise these patients may have remained undiagnosed. Rectal biopsy has, therefore, a definite role in these patients with clinical features of acute diarrhea. Patients with the diagnosis of giardiasis have been found to have no abnormality on sigmoidoscopy or rectal biopsy. Patients with the diagnosis of amoebiasis showed characteristic changes of amoebic colitis on sigmoidoscopic examination. Rectal biopsy was found to show typical changes suggestive of amoebiasis. Rectal biopsy at times may remain unclassified. An additional cause for acute diarrheas remains to be identified in these patients. 

Conflict of Interest: None.

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