THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON HEALTH SERVICES TRANSFORMATION
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Gastrointestinal Diseases in Religious Mass Gatherings: A Scoping Review

Code: 1708

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Backgrounds

Mass religious gatherings bring together millions of people in crowded, hygienically limited environments. These conditions may be associated with gastrointestinal disorders in pilgrimages. This study was conducted to review the existing literature on gastrointestinal health issues in mass religious gatherings..

Methods

Scoping Review

2000 - 2026

PubMed, WOS, Scopus

✓Mass religious gatherings
✓Gastrointestinal diseases

6 studies included. Finally, a qualitative analysis of the included articles was performed.

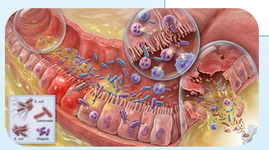
Findings

Most of the studies conducted were related to Arbaeen. The gastrointestinal disorders studied were classified into three categories:

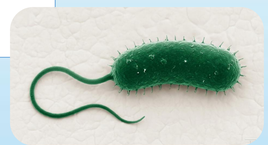
(1) Foodborne disease and food poisoning outbreaks



(2) Infectious diarrhea caused by enteric pathogens, primarily bacterial agents such as pathogenic Escherichia coli, Salmonella, and Shigella



(3) cholera and acute watery diarrhea



The main risk factors were contaminated food and water, poor hand hygiene, inadequate sanitation, and low health literacy.

Conclusion

Gastrointestinal diseases, especially food- and waterborne infections, are a recurrent threat at religious mass gatherings. Planning for every such event should include safe food and water, sanitation, hygiene education, and syndromic surveillance.

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