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## Correspondence

### On duodenal stump leakage caused by adult human *Taenia*

To the editor: Shao Xinxin and colleagues recently described a case of duodenal stump leakage caused by *Taenia saginata* (*T. saginata*).<sup>1</sup> Apparently, they did not identify the discharged adult tapeworm recovered after the treatment neither morphologically nor molecularly. The authors concluded that the species responsible for the symptoms was *T. saginata* based on the fact that the patient mentioned that he had been infected by *T. saginata* two years ago.<sup>1</sup> We assumed that if the patient was diagnosed two years ago, he was also treated to eliminate the worm. However, previous parasitisation did not prevent re-infection with the same or with other *Taenia* species. The patient came from Tibet where the three human *Taenia* species co-exist, i.e. *Taenia solium*, *T. saginata* and *Taenia asiatica*.<sup>2,3</sup>

In Tibet, people do have the habit not only of eating raw or undercooked beef but also pork,<sup>2,3</sup> therefore, the species causing the stump leakage could be any of the three species. *Taenia saginata*, acquired by the consumption of infected beef, is the least dangerous species since it only causes human taeniosis. On the other hand, human cysticercosis is a disorder caused by the extraintestinal larval stage of *Taenia solium* that can be fatal when the cysticerci are located in the central nervous system (neurocysticercosis). *Taenia solium*, as well as *Taenia asiatica*, are species transmitted to humans by the ingestion of infected pork, and there is a relevant knowledge gap about the third human *Taenia*, *Taenia asiatica*, of which it is still not known whether it is able to produce human cysticercosis or not.<sup>4</sup>

In addition to the fact that taeniasis can be a cause of complications in other gastrointestinal disorders (as the case published by Shao et al.<sup>1</sup>) in human *Taenia* cases, it is crucial to establish which are the species responsible for the infection at least for three reasons: (1) to

properly treat *Taenia solium* patients to avoid human cysticercosis; (2) to establish adequate control measures depending on the species identified; and (3) to investigate the possible presence of cysticercosis in *Taenia asiatica* patients.

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