

## CHAGAS DISEASE PREVENTION AND CONTROL STRATEGIES IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF SANTA INÊS-BA

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Chagas disease is an endemic parasitic infection that necessitates ongoing surveillance to minimize the incidence of new cases. This study aimed to delineate strategies for the prevention and control of Chagas disease within the municipality of Santa Inês, Bahia. The research is being conducted in Santa Inês, located in the Jiquiriçá Valley in the southwestern region of Bahia. This area has historically been considered a silent zone for Chagas disease, as there were no official reports of Triatominae, the *Trypanosoma cruzi* vector, until 2022. However, in that year, the first report of a triatomine insect was described, after biting a child in a rural area of the municipality. In response to this incident, the Parasitology Laboratory at the Instituto Federal Baiano - Campus Santa Inês, in collaboration with the Municipal Health Department and the Pathology and Molecular Biology Laboratory of Instituto Gonçalo Moniz/FIOCRUZ, initiated several actions aimed at preventing Chagas disease. To date, the following activities have been implemented: frequent lectures for community health agents and residents; the establishment of a triatomine information hub; improvement of the epidemiological surveillance system; and improvement of housing conditions through efforts by the municipal government (including the plastering of homes). Furthermore, materials such as a book addressing the topic in the region, a scientific article, and an educational pamphlet have been produced. With the surveillance system now operational and prevention strategies in place, it is crucial to intensify focus on human health units and to investigate potential non-human reservoirs to effectively manage and control any emerging cases of the disease.

**Keyword:** Parasitology, Educational actions, *Trypanosoma cruzi*