

Abstract

Parasitic protozoans of the genus *Leishmania* circulate between vectors and hosts during their life cycle, in which they come into contact with the immune system. In the host body, infection can lead to the development of a disease called leishmaniasis. This can manifest itself in a number of ways, with the best known forms being referred to as visceral, mucocutaneous and cutaneous leishmaniasis. This thesis focuses on the host immune response during the cutaneous and visceral forms of leishmaniasis. In addition, attention has been given to host, vector and parasite factors that differ between cutaneous and visceral leishmaniasis forms and that may influence the different clinical manifestations. Attention is paid not only to factors related to immunity, but also to factors such as parasite inoculum dose sizes, temperature differences between skin and internal organs, parasite genetics, and others.

Keywords – *Leishmania*, visceral leishmaniasis, cutaneous leishmaniasis, immune response, parasite, immunity