

BUGS TRIATOMINAE

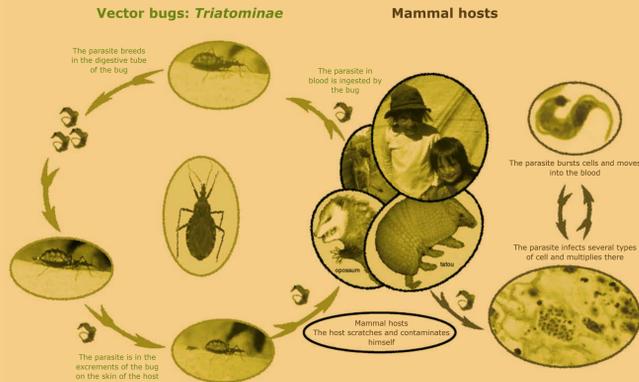
Chagas disease



Name *Triatoma infestans*
Length 1,5 cm
Longevity as a biting insect 1 à 2 years
Special feature they excrete at the place where they bite

Biology of the vector

The five larval stages and adults of both sexes are haematophagous. *Triatominae* become active at nightfall after remaining hidden in dry places during the day. They hide under beds, in cracks in walls near people in bed who are bitten while they sleep.



Geographic distribution

Distribution of Chagas disease



of 141 triatome species, 121 are strictly American. These insects live in dry or humid forests from the north of the United States to Patagonia. After human colonisation of these areas, they adapted to human habitats - especially where these are poor and old.

Vector transmission

Triatomines prefer to feed on mammals, including humans. They deposit the *Trypanosoma cruzi* in their excrement during these blood meals. Scratching results in penetration by the parasite at the site of the bite. *Triatoma infestans* is the main vector of the agent

of Chagas disease in South America. It causes a death rate of about 5% among young children. A chronic form with damage to the heart or the digestive system develops in 30% of cases.



Prevention and control

Health professionals have scant resources. Drugs are ineffective in the chronic phase and have undesirable effects. There is no vaccine and resistance to insecticides is observed. Vector control is therefore of crucial importance:

- Eliminate bugs in dwellings
- Use appropriate insecticides
- Improve makeshift housing
- Eliminate favourable habitats

A neglected and under-diagnosed disease that is strictly American