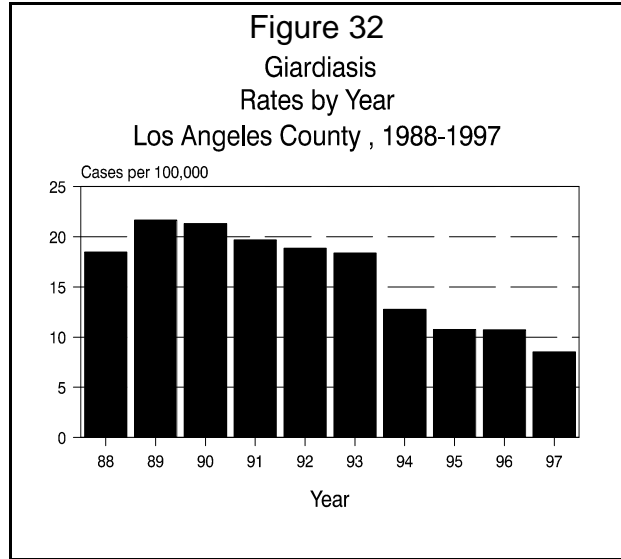


GIARDIASIS

CRUDE DATA	
Number of Cases	770
Annual Incidence ^a	
LA County	8.51
United States	N/A
Age at Onset	
Mean	23
Median	17
Range	<1-84 yrs
Case Fatality	
LA County	0.0%
United States	N/A

^aCases per 100,000 population.



ETIOLOGY

Giardiasis is caused by ingestion of cysts of the protozoan parasite *Giardia lamblia*.

DISEASE ABSTRACT

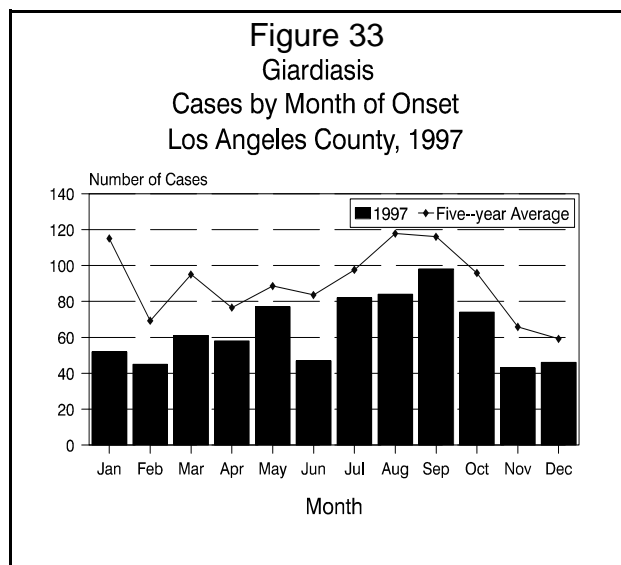
The current low rate of giardiasis has not been seen since the early 1980s. Two giardiasis outbreaks were reported in 1997.

STRATIFIED DATA

Trends: The rate of giardiasis has dropped annually since its 1989 high point of 21.7 cases per 100,000. The 1997 incidence of giardiasis was the lowest since 1981 (Figure 32).

Seasonality: The greatest number of cases was reported in the summer (Figure 33), as is typical. The January spike noted in previous years was not found in 1997.

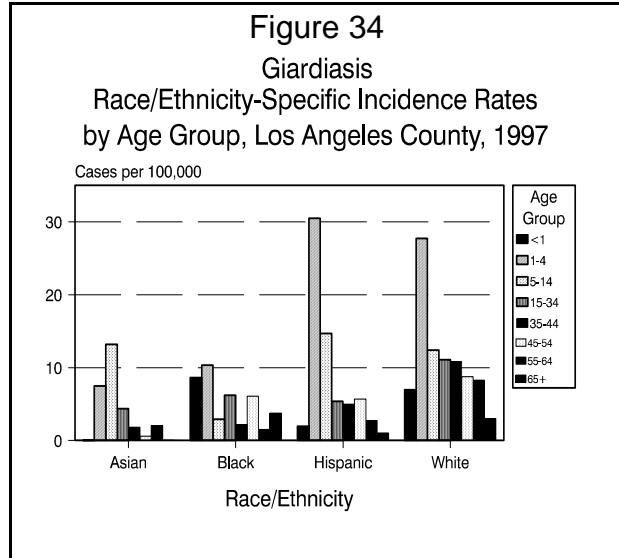
Age: The age-specific incidence of giardiasis was greatest in children aged 1-4 years (26.6 per 100,000) followed by children aged 5-14 years (13.0 per 100,000) (Figure 34). As in the previous two years, the highest rates among Whites and Hispanics were in the 1-to-4 year



age group. The rate among White children 1-4 years old dropped 40% from 46.3 to 27.7 per 100,000; in the same age group the Hispanic rate dropped 17% from 36.8 to 30.4 per 100,000. The highest rates for Asians again occurred among children 5 to 14. One-third of all cases were Hispanic children aged 0-14.

Sex: The male-to-female rate ratio dropped from 1.5:1 to 1.2:1, the lowest on record. The drop in cases among young White adults accounts for much of this change.

Race/Ethnicity: Whites had the highest disease rate in all age groups above age 14 and below 65+, as well as the highest age-adjusted rate overall. Asians and Blacks continued to experience relatively low rates of giardiasis (Figure 34).



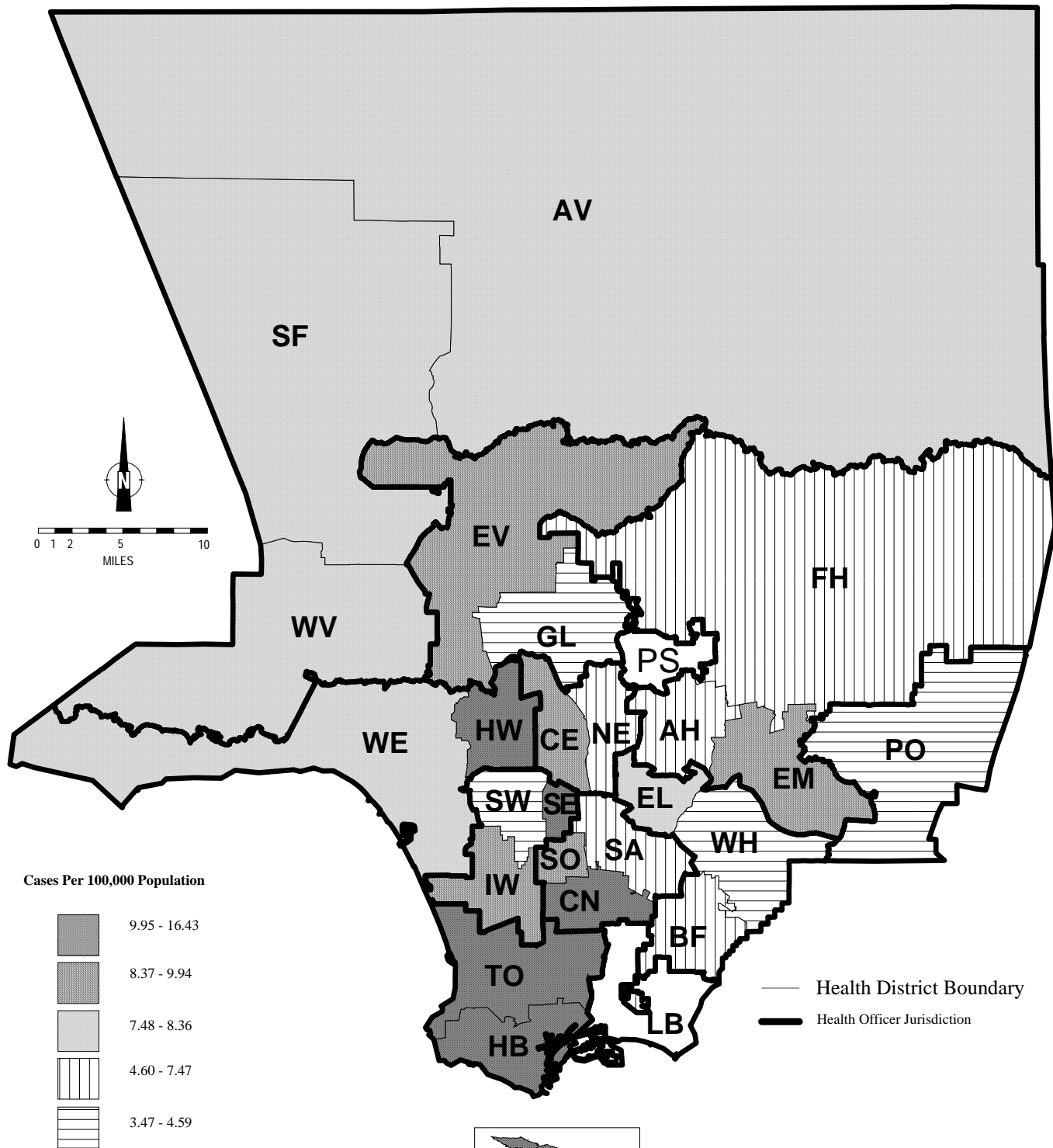
Location: Torrance and Harbor Health Districts had the highest rates, but in each district the rate dropped substantially (from 19.4 to 16.4 cases per 100,000 population in Torrance and from 17.3 to 14.4 in Harbor) (Map 4).

COMMENT

Prior to 1997 risk factor data were not systematically collected, so the cause of rate decline over the past decade has not been properly studied; future reports will include risk analysis. One probable reason is the reduction in sexual transmission between men, suggested in LAC by the continuing drop in the giardiasis rate among males, especially Whites and/or young adults. This phenomenon has also been demonstrated both locally and nationwide for other sexually transmissible diseases including syphilis and gonorrhea.

MAP 4. Giardiasis

Rates by Health District, Los Angeles County, 1997*



*Excludes Long Beach and Pasadena Data.

