INTRODUCTION

Parasitic diseases are still considered a major health problem in Egypt. Of such diseases, amoebic and giardia lamblia infestations were reported to have a high incidence rate especially in children under 5 years of age (Ree, 1983; Wright, 1984).

Many authors had reported an intimate relationship between a healthy gastrointestinal tract and its function to absorb nutrients from the diet (Solmons, 1981). Also, pronounced alterations in serum iron, copper an d zinc are widely documented as an accompanying biochemical manifest-tion of most infectious diseases whether bacterial, viral rickettesial or parasitic (Beisel, 1976). Thus, diarrhea, which is the most common symptom in clinical amoebiasis and giardiasis of young children (Tandon, 1984), probably can result in nutritional impiarments in such affected children.

Thus, the aim of this study was to evaluate zinc, copper, magnesium and calcium status in young children affected by a variable degree of amoebic and/or giardia diarrhea.