INTRODUCTION

The genus Campylobacter can truely be described as a "new" genus to clinical microbiologists, for its recognition as a significant agent of gastro-enteritis has been a recent occurence of the later 1970's. The recognition of camphylobacter has been slow due to the difficulty in isolating the organism from stool. This had been attributed to its unusual growth requirements.Kaplan and Barrett (1981).

Because a study done before appropriate methods were used to isolate Campylobacter jejuni showed that fecal cultures had a low benefit-to-cost ratio, discontinuation of such cultures was recommended. Blaser; et al (1983).

Indeed, in children world-wide, Campylobacter fetus S.S. jejuni are the most common cause of the diarrhoeas previously labeled non-specific (up to 30 %). Hornick and Goeprich (1983).

The name Campylobacter, meaning "curved rod" in Greek, was given to these organisms when it was found

that they differed in their biochemical characteristics from true members of the genus vibrio. Blaser (1984).

In 1980's, human enteric infection is caused by Campylobacter as often as or more often than by Shigella and Salmonella. Jawitz; et al (1984).

Campylobacters have become very important in recent years as a cause of food poisoning. Collins and Lyne (1984).

At present the definition of Campylobacter relies on only a few characters, in particular G + C mol % content of DNA, their spiral appearance, and respiratory requirements. Goodwin; et al (1985).

Campylobacter jejuni and C. coli have been recognised as common intestinal pathogens in previously healthy persons, being isolated in the stools of 4.2 % to 13.9 % of patients with diarrhoea. Francioli; et al (1985).

Campylobacter spp. are firmly established as common causes of gastroenteritis in man, particularly

under the age of two years. They have also been implicated in bacteraemia in young children. These organisms have been found in a wide variety of animals, including cattle, sheep, gulls, monkeys, pigs and domestic pets such as cats and dogs. Epidemiological studies have been shown that Campylobacteriosis may be acquired by contact with animals or by ingestion of contaminated water or feeds, in particular poultry, unpasteurised milk and red meat. Further, it is clear that Campylobacter-associated gastroenteritis is an important medical problem in many counteries. Lastovica; et al (1986).

So, this study is an effort to evaluate Campylobacter gastroenteritis in our locality.