

Social dominance, immunocompetence and parasites in male Alpine ibex (*Capra ibex*)

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The immunocompetence handicap hypothesis (ICHH) views the cost of secondary sexual characters from an endocrinological perspective. This hypothesis suggests that testosterone promotes the development of sexual ornaments but at the same time it is thought to suppress immunological defence. In this study, we will test the ICHH in male Alpine ibex (*Capra ibex*), using a population from Gran Paradiso National Park (Italy). We will investigate the relationship between social dominance rank, testosterone levels and parasite loads. Observations on the outcomes of agonistic interactions between males will be used to determine the social rank, and fecal sample analysis will be used to quantify the testosterone level and the number of eggs of parasites per infected host.