Commentary

Highlights on Hepatitis E Virus (HEV)

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Received: April 20, 2021; **Accepted**: April 25, 2021; **Published**: April 29, 2021

Keywords Hepatitis E virus

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Hepatitis E virus in birds (HEV) is a single-stranded, positive-sense RNA virus with a genome size of about 6.6 kb. To date, four majors avian HEV genotypes have been described and categorised into the Orthohepevirus B genus of the Hepeviridae family. Hepatitis-splenomegaly syndrome, big liver and spleen disease, and hepatic rupture hemorrhage syndrome in chickens are all caused by avian HEV, which is genetically and antigenically similar to mammalian HEV. With the discovery of more avian HEV genotypes, epidemiological studies have shown a wider host tropism. Owing to a lack of an efficient cell culture method, the mechanisms of avian HEV replication and pathogenesis remain unknown. The capacity of avian HEV to infect animals has recently been demonstrated by the detection and characterization of animal strains of the virus. Despite the fact that it has not yet been observed in humans, the possibility of a zoonotic HEV capable of transmission to humans must be considered. The current state of awareness in virology, epidemiology, pathogenesis, clinical presentation, transmission, diagnosis, and prevention of avian HEV is the subject of this review article.

Highlights

- Owing to a lack of an effective cell culture method, the mechanisms of avian HEV replication and pathogenesis remain unknown.
- With the increased genotypes of avian HEV found in epidemiological studies, a wider host tropism is also noticeable.
- The capacity of avian HEV to infect animals has recently been demonstrated by the detection and characterization of animal strains of the virus.
- It's important to consider the possibility of a zoonotic HEV that can be transmitted to humans.