

HUMAN BOCAVIRUS AND LOWER RESPIRATORY TRACT INFECTION

Dear Sir,

I read with great interest Al-Rousan et al's study on the prevalence of human bocavirus (HBoV) in the nasopharyngeal aspirates (NPA) of children hospitalised with lower respiratory tract infection. The authors reported a high prevalence of HBoV⁽¹⁾ and concluded that "more attention should be given to diagnosing HBoV in patients with lower respiratory tract infection using molecular techniques".⁽¹⁾

Although I agree that the detected prevalence of HBoV is high, I would like to discuss the rationale of that conclusion. Firstly, it is evidenced that HBoV can still be observed in asymptomatic patients. Zeng et al conducted a study in China and reported that HBoV was detected in the NPA samples of 10.3% (45 out of 436) of symptomatic patients and from 0.7% (one out of 150) of asymptomatic control children.⁽²⁾ Secondly, while I fully agree that HBoV is a pathogen, the authors had not conducted a complete investigation on other possible confounding pathogens in the studied children. Hence, there is a possibility that other pre-existing problems may have been missed.

Yours sincerely,

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