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Nipah: the virus with pandemic potential

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Abstract: While the world grapples with Covid-19, there is another virus that could cause the next pandemic in Asia. Nipah is one of the most lethal viruses, with a high death rate and potential of causing a pandemic. The first outbreak of Nipah virus happened about 22 years ago in Malaysia, leading to the virus's identification in 1999. Following that, outbreaks have been observed practically annually, implying that the virus has been infecting humans unnoticed for many years. The high mortality rate of the Nipah virus, which ranges from 40% to 75%, plus the lack of therapy make it a major worry. World Health Organization (WHO) review each year, the large list of pathogens which pose greatest risk to Human health. Nipah virus is among top ten in their list, which focus on viruses that have no vaccines. This review elaborates about the past outbreaks of Nipah virus, mode of transmission, clinical symptoms, variables that contribute to virus emergence and spread, as well as preventative and control strategies to ensure a decrease in number of incidents in future.

Keywords: Nipah, fruit bats, primary host, encephalitis.