

Chikungunya virus: Reared its head in Karachi-Pakistan

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Madam, I would like to draw your attention about Chikungunya Virus (CHIKV), *Aedes aegypti* mosquito-borne an emerging alpha virus disease.¹ CHIKV has recently reared its head and is affecting hundreds of people in the world's highly populated city Karachi-Pakistan. The CHIKV has been identified in over 60 countries in America, Africa, Asia and Europe.² However, in recent days mosquito vectors of CHIKV have spread to Karachi, Pakistan. CHIKV caused widespread outbreaks of debilitating human disease in the past few years and more than 1.9 million people have been infected.^{2,3} CHIKV invasion of susceptible cells is mediated by two viral glycoproteins (E1 and E2) which carry the main antigenic determinants and form an icosahedral shell at the virion surface.¹

The severity of CHIKV disease rigorously effect the quality of life of infected individuals for weeks, months or even years.⁴ It causes headache, nausea, fatigue, skin rashes, fever, and severe muscle and joint pain.² In addition, it also causes gastrointestinal, cardiac and neurological complications.² The disease shares some clinical signs with dengue fever and can be misdiagnosed in areas where dengue virus is common.

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We cannot say that we were not warned. In 1970, it has been cautioned that *Aedes aegypti*, should be studied as a long-term regional, national and world problem rather than as a momentary local threat to the communities. No one can foresee the extent of the future threat of *Aedes aegypti* to mankind.⁵ Since there is no specific treatment or vaccine for *Aedes aegypti* born Chikungunya Virus disease and recently it reared its head in world's highly populated city, Karachi Pakistan, the World Health Organization should take this disease on priority basis to formulate outbreak management plans and develop vaccine to eradicate the emerging burden of CHIKV from various corners of the globe.

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