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PURPOSE OF THE ARBOVIRUS INFORMATION EXCHANGE:

To exchange information on a timely basis. The recipients are those who study various aspects of arboviruses. The Exchange contains preliminary reports, summaries, observations, and comments submitted voluntarily by qualified agencies and individual investigators. The appearance in the Exchange of any information, data, opinions, or views does not constitute formal publication and should not be referred to in "Reference" sections of papers or included in lists of publications. The Exchange is not a "peer reviewed" publication; in fact, it is not a publication at all. Any reference to or quotation of any part of the Exchange must be authorized directly by the agency or person submitting the text.
A probable laboratory infection with Venezuelan Equine Encephalitis (VEE) virus occurred in a staff member of the Virus Section of this institute. The causative agent was VEE subtype IF (prototype strain SP An 50783), which had been isolated from whole blood of a bat, *Carollia perspicillata*, captured 20 April, 1976 at Ribeira Valley, Iguape County, São Paulo, Brazil. Clinical manifestations consisted of fever (39°-40°C maximum), headache (generalized and very severe), nausea without vomiting, and dizziness. Illness lasted for three days.

Leukopenia (5,200 white blood cells) was observed on the first day of illness. On the third day white cells were at 4,000. Serum SGOT, SGPT, and bilirubin levels were within normal limits. A virus strain (BE H 427922) was isolated from a blood sample obtained on the first day of illness.

The mode of infection remains unknown, but it is suspected that it was through aerosol transmission. The patient denied contact with the infecting agent for the six days prior to onset of illness and he reported no cuts or abrasions while working with bats prior to that time. He had not been outside the city of Belém for several months before the onset of this illness. This is the first documentation of human disease caused by this subtype of VEE virus in Brazil.

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**Editor's note:** At the American Society for Tropical Medicine and Hygiene annual meeting in New Orleans, Louisiana (November 5-8, 1990) a paper was presented (see abstract below) describing additional human infections with this VEE subtype in Brazil.

**HUMAN DISEASE CAUSED BY VENEZUELAN EQUINE ENCEPHALITIS SUBTYPE IF IN RIBEIRA VALLEY, SAO PAULO, BRAZIL.** L.B. Iversson, A.P.A. Travassos Da Rosa, S.G. Rodrigues, and M.D.B. Rosa. Public Health School, of the University of Sao Paulo, Evandro Chagas Institute, Ministry of Health, Belém, Para, Brazil.

In 1976, a new subtype (IF) of VEE virus was isolated from a bat, *Carollia perspicillata*, and from a pool of *Culex* (Melanoconion) mosquitoes in Ribeira Valley, a densely forested area in the state of Sao Paulo, Brazil. Human sera collected in the region between 1977 and 1987 had a high prevalence of HI and neutralizing antibodies to this virus. Development of disease in a laboratory researcher provided evidence that this enzootic VEE virus was pathogenic. We investigated a group of 25 soldiers aged 21 to 35, who underwent 15 days of training in the forested area of Ribeira Valley. Twenty (20) of these soldiers had a febrile disease around 7 days after their return. HI tests to 19 arboviruses and ELISA for Hantaan virus were performed. HI-positives were tested by neutralization, complement fixation test and MAC-ELISA to subtype IF of VEE. Neutralizing antibodies to this virus were present in 6 soldiers; in 2 of them with fever, severe headache, general malaise, diarrhea and sleepiness, MAC-ELISA and CF tests were positive to VEE subtype IF. Evidence of past infections caused by three other arboviruses was observed in 3 men. This is the first report of naturally-acquired disease caused by VEE subtype IF.