



SEMINAR

Department of Public Health



University of Otago, Wellington | 23A Mein Street | Newtown | Wellington

The Emergence of Zoonotic Viruses with Pandemic Potential

Professor Jonathan Heeney, Cambridge University

Awareness of the human health risks of zoonotic viruses have grown. There is a clear need for veterinarians and medics to work closely together to define the sources and triggers of zoonotic spill-overs, treating, preventing and developing vaccines for them. Current concerns include H7N9 flu transmission from migratory bird populations to humans. This comes on the heels of other major zoonotic viral epidemics such as Zika, Dengue and Chikungunya in South America. With increasing frequency other acute emerging or re-emerging viral diseases such as Middle Eastern respiratory syndrome (MERS), West-Nile virus, and Ebola virus have emerged, as well as the less obvious, insidious, slow viral diseases such as AIDS, HCV and HBV. This lecture will focus on viral infections with zoonotic origins that become serious killers once they are able to establish the necessary adaptations for efficient human-to-human transmission sufficient to reach epidemic proportions.



ALL WELCOME!

Professor of Comparative Pathology and Head of the Laboratory of Viral Zoonotics. His research team focuses on cross species transmission of viruses, and the co-evolution of viruses and their hosts including the evolution of immune mechanisms of disease protection. Not only has this interest led to the discovery of a number of new viruses, genetic comparison of host and viral sequences from the same individual and sample have provided powerful genetic tools to solve some of nature's intriguing mysteries. Currently this laboratory applies such molecular technologies to address important questions concerning zoonotic infections of importance to both veterinary and human health. Ongoing projects include the evolution of human and animal viruses, the search for novel hepatitis viruses and the dynamics of norovirus infections.

Please note different time: Monday 27th March 2017 12.00 to 12.45

Small Lecture Theatre, Level D, University of Otago Wellington

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