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Viral diarrhea in children in Saudi Arabia

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Viral diarrhea is a major cause of morbidity in developed and developing countries. The aim of this study was to determine the frequency of gastroenteric viruses circulating in Saudi Arabian children by using electron microscopic method to detect any enteropathogenic viral agents. Of 1049 stool specimens collected between 2004 and 2005, enteropathogenic viral agents were detected in 277 (26%) diarrheal children < 6 years of age. Of these, rotavirus was detected in 189/277 (68%), coronavirus in 66/277 of cases (24%), enteric adenovirus was in 14 cases (5%), norovirus in 4 cases (2%), and astrovirus was identified in 2 cases (1%). The introduction of affordable viral diagnosis in Saudi pediatric hospitals will improve patients care.

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