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Hantavirus in the UK

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Hantavirus in the UK: Although there has been serological evidence for hantavirus infection in the United Kingdom including associated human disease, since the 1980s there has been no conclusive detection of the any virus. However, in early 2012 the UK diagnostic reference services at PHE provided compelling indication of a case of autochthonous hantavirus infection in a UK patient suffering from acute kidney injury who had no travel history outside of the UK, but who had been exposed to native rodents. This provided a rare opportunity to investigate the situation and determine the source of infection and the hantavirus responsible. A survey of rodents infesting the patient's property was undertaken. A total of 11 rodents were collected: 5 *Apodemus sylvaticus*, 4 *Rattus norvegicus* and 2 *Myodes glareolus*. Hantaviral RNA was detected via RT-PCR in lung samples from two *Rattus norvegicus*. Complete sequencing and phylogenetic analysis of all three segments established the virus as a Seoul hantavirus correlating with the serology findings from the patient. Isolation of Humber virus is the first UK hantavirus isolate and confirms the presence of at least one pathogenic Seoul hantavirus in Europe. Other cases of UK hantavirus have since been detected.

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