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Absence of hepatitis E virus active infection in farm bred pigs from the central region of Portugal

Ana Miguel Matos[1], **Goncalves D**[1], **Pereira-Vaz J**[2], **da Costa R P R**[3], **Donato A1** and **Luxo C**[1]
[1]University of Coimbra, Portugal
[2]Hospital and University Centre of Coimbra, Portugal
[3]Polytechnic Institute of Coimbra, Portugal

The main aim of the present study was to evaluate the prevalence of hepatitis E virus (HEV) active infection in farm bred pigs from central region of Portugal in order to access the risk for the public health caused by the consumption of pork meat. Forty outdoor farm raised pigs were included in the study. The study group included 25 adult and 15 young animals. Fecal samples were collected from each animal, shortly after emission. All samples were submitted to nucleic acid extraction followed by RT-PCR Real Time amplification, aiming the detection of HEV genome. Positive and negative controls were included in all experiments. After amplification process, no HEV-RNA was detected in any of the evaluated fecal samples. These results point to the absence of active HEV infection in the farm bred pigs from the central region of Portugal and therefore suggest that no risk of acquiring HEV infection may exists associated with the consumption of this kind of meat. Nevertheless, and despite no active viral infection with HEV was detected in the studied animals, seroepidemiological studies have not been performed and risk of possible zoonotic infections in our country cannot be completely discarded.

Biography

Ana Miguel Matos has completed her PhD in 2011 at Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Coimbra, where she currently works as an Associate Professor in Microbiology department. She has published some papers in reputed journals and several abstracts in both national and international conferences. She is also an Associate Director of the Clinical Laboratory at Faculty of Pharmacy of University of Coimbra, Portugal.

anamatos@ci.uc.pt

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