LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Zika virus transmission: What should we be concerned about apart from mosquito control

The report by Wong et al on Zika virus is very interesting. Indeed, this infection is a serious problem that can be easily forgotten by practitioners. The disease is an acute febrile illness where the patient can have thrombocytopenia. Fetal death as a result of the infection in pregnant women is also a serious concern at present. As noted by Wong et al, “the priorities of control include reinforcing education of travelers to and residents of endemic areas, preventing further local transmission by vectors, and an integrated vector management program.” There is no doubt that control should include strict screening at ports to prevent imported cases. However, it should be noted that the screening can easily be ineffective. It should be noted that a patient might be asymptomatic or afebrile at the time of immigration and this can result in the first appearance of disease when the patient has already entered the destination. In addition, not all infected cases have symptoms during the course of infection and this can be the silent source for disease spread. Since at present, mosquito vector can be seen worldwide and extend to nontropical countries, it is very hard to control the mosquito. Finally, it should also be noted that new possible modes of transmission such as sexual transmission and transfusion-related transmission have also recently been proposed. Great concern on those new modes of transmission is required and special attention from practitioners is necessary.

References


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