ARTHROPOD BORNE VIRAL INFECTIONS: CURRENT STATUS AND RESEARCH

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Arthropod borne viral infections occur almost with clockwork precision every year in several parts of India resulting in high morbidity and mortality. Dengue and Japanese encephalitis have been the two so far, most commonly seen across the country. In 2005-2006 Chikunguniya swept across several states adding on to the repertoire. To bring to focus the current status and research on these endemic arboviral infections this book edited by D Raghunath and C Durga Rao is a compilation of papers presented at a symposium on Arthropod Borne Viruses, sponsored by Sir Dorabji Tata Trust on behalf of Sir Dorabji Tata Center for Tropical Diseases in conjunction with department of Microbiology and Cell Biology, Indian Institute of Science.

This compilation is extremely relevant at this point of time to bring together deliberations by a team of experts to provide information on basic virus and arthropod interaction, epidemiology and spread of the infections, virus host-immune interaction, clinical presentations and complications strategies for vaccines and some areas of recent developments and research.

Starting with an overview of viral infections in India the paper discusses prevalence, seasonal trend, risk factors, several case studies and surveillance data. The second paper is a global overview, discussing the reasons for re-emergence of Arboviral infections.

Papers on basic virology of flavivirus and vectors involved in transmission give a detailed description of the nature, habitat and factors responsible for survival and spread of the infection. Subsequent chapters deal with specific diseases like Kysanur forest disease, followed by its status report. Papers on Dengue deal with immunopathogenesis, of uncomplicated disease and dengue hemorrhagic fever, clinical features and management, dengue vaccine, its efficacy and future prospects including field trials in Thailand.

Papers on JE begin with discussion on clinical features and confounding features of other CNS diseases like epidemic brain attack fever and Reye's syndrome. This is followed by immunology and vaccine development. An interesting paper to read is the bionomics of JE in India and control strategies. Chikungunya in Karnataka and its bordering states and a paper on Chandipura virus completes the list of arboviral infections in India.

Papers on the current status of research in molecular and structural studies of the virus, novel vaccines, virus vector interface, new insect arthropod repellents are some of the highlights of this book.

A paper which should attract the attention of decision makers for preventive strategies is -Health-Development-agriculture-Environment New linkages and new Paradigm(Challenges of Arboviruses in India. Pictorial representations bring up the rear of the book with tables, maps and other charts.

This is an excellent compilation with attractive presentation, the front jacket aptly presenting the close link between disease, vector and environment.

The editors must be complimented on compiling the papers presented at the symposium on arbovirus infections with special reference to the Indian scenario. The book will be found useful not only to researchers, infectious disease specialists and epidemiologists but also to policy makers for implementing preventive strategies.

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