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Introduction

The togaviruses are mainly arthropod-borne viruses.

Eastern equine encephalitis virus

This disease-causing togavirus is epidemic in the Americas and cycles are maintained by mosquitos. Eastern equine encephalitis is zoonotic causing fever and encephalitis in man.

In pigs, young animals are the most severely affected (incoordination, depression, seizures, mild fever and vomiting) with the disease being inapparent in animals over two months old. Various serological surveys have revealed significant numbers of seropositive animals.

The first natural outbreak of this disease was seen in 1972 in three-week-old piglets and an outbreak in younger pigs in 1991 experienced 80% mortality.

On post-mortem examination, no gross lesions are observed but microscopic lesions include meningoencephalitis and myocardial necrosis.

There is no treatment.

Getah virus

Getah virus is found across Asia and is primarily a pathogen of horses. Again mosquitos are implicated in the epidemiology.

Getah virus was first reported in pigs in 1987 when it was seen in newborn piglets showing depression, tremors and diarrhoea. Mortality was 100%.

In Japan this virus is endemic in some regions.

There is no treatment.

Sagiyama virus

Sagiyama virus was originally considered to be a variant of Getah virus but is now thought to be a separate virus.

Sagiyama infections were reported in the 1960s based on serological evidence and the first outbreak was reported in 2006 in nine-week-old pigs. It was characterised by depressed growth, panting and arthritis.

There is no treatment.