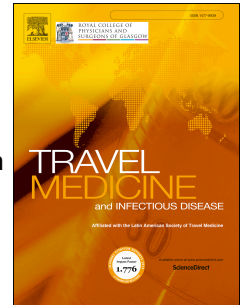


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Influenza virus but not MERS coronavirus circulation in Iran, 2013–2016: Comparison between pilgrims and general population

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Influenza virus but not MERS coronavirus circulation in Iran, 2013-2016:

comparison between pilgrims and general population

Background

The pilgrimage to Mecca and Karbala bring many Muslims to a confined area.

Respiratory tract infections are the most common diseases transmitted during mass gatherings in Hajj, Umrah and Karbala. The aim of this study was to determine and compare the prevalence of Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV) and influenza virus infections among Iranian general population and pilgrims with severe acute respiratory infections (SARI) returning from Mecca and Karbala during 2013-2016.

Methods

During 2013-2016, a total of 42351 throat swabs were examined for presence of influenza viruses and MERS-CoV in Iranian general population and pilgrims returning from Mecca and Karbala with SARI by using one step RT-PCR kit.

Results

None of the patients had MERS-CoV but influenza viruses were detected in 12.7% with high circulation of influenza A/H1N1 (47.1%).

Conclusion

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