BRIEF COMMUNICATION
FIRST ISOLATION OF DENGUE 4 IN THE STATE OF SÃO PAULO, BRAZIL, 2011

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SUMMARY
We report the first isolation of Dengue virus 4 (DENV-4) in the state of São Paulo, from two patients - one living in São José do Rio Preto and the other one in Paulo de Faria, both cities located in the Northwest region of the state. The virus isolations were accomplished in the clone C6/36 Aedes albopictus cell line, followed by indirect immunofluorescence assays, performed with type-specific monoclonal antibodies that showed positive reactions for DENV-4. The results were confirmed by Nested RT-PCR and Real-Time RT-PCR assays. The introduction of DENV-4 in a country that already has to deal with the transmission of three other serotypes increases the possibility of the occurrence of more severe cases of the disease. The importance of early detection of dengue cases, before the virus spreads and major outbreaks occur, should be emphasized.

KEYWORDS: Dengue 4; Virus isolation; RT-PCR.

Dengue is currently a major public-health problem, having become the most significant vector-borne viral disease worldwide. Approximately 2 billion people live in risk areas, consisting mostly of tropical and subtropical developing countries, which means that 2/5 of world population is at risk of contracting dengue. Dengue, in the Americas, has shown an upward trend, with more than thirty countries reporting cases of the disease. Historically, references based on clinical signs for the presence of Dengue virus (DENV) in the 20th century in Brazil, date from 1916 in the state of São Paulo and 1923 in the state of Rio de Janeiro (Niterói). However, there is no laboratory diagnosis documentation. The virus reemerged in the North of Brazil in 1981, when an epidemic caused by DENV-1 and DENV-4 was registered in Boa Vista (RO). After that, a major outbreak caused by DENV-1 occurred in Rio de Janeiro in 1986. The serotypes 2 and 3 were also introduced into the country in the following years through Rio de Janeiro, spreading to the other states where the vector Aedes aegypti has been present since its reintroduction in the late 70’s.

Dengue transmission, with clinical and laboratory diagnosis, began to be reported in the state of São Paulo in March 1987. In the summer of 1990/91 an epidemic of major proportions caused by DENV-1 started in Ribeirão Preto, and quickly spread to neighboring counties and other regions. In 1997, a new serotype, DENV-2 was introduced and in 2002 the first autochthonous case of DENV-3 was reported. Epidemics have occurred yearly in different regions of the state with transmission throughout the year, showing that the disease has become endemic in several counties.

In August 2010, the first cases of DENV-4 were registered in Brazil, in Boa Vista (RO). Subsequently, the virus was detected in the North (states of Amazonas and Pará) and in the Northeast (states of Bahia, Pernambuco and Piauí). In the Southeast, the first episode of the disease occurred in the state of Rio de Janeiro in 2011.

In the present study, we report the first isolations of DENV-4 in the state of São Paulo, from two patients - one living in São José do Rio Preto and the other one in Paulo de Faria, both located in the Northwest region of the state. The onset of the symptoms occurred on 27th February 2011 for the patient from São José do Rio Preto (SPH 317947) and 4th March 2011 for the patient from Paulo de Faria (SPH 319325). The symptoms shown by the patients were fever, headache and myalgia, compatible with the classification of Dengue Fever. The evolution of the disease was satisfactory, with complete recovery.

Virus isolations were accomplished in clone C6/36 Aedes albopictus cell line, inoculated with serum samples collected from both patients on the day one after the onset of symptoms. Indirect immunofluorescence assays, performed with type-specific monoclonal antibodies, showed...
The authors are grateful to Dr. Cecília Lúcia S. Santos for the critical

**Acknowledgments**

The authors are grateful to Dr. Cecília Lúcia S. Santos for the critical evaluation of the paper. The financial support of the Brazilian agency Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico (CNPq) and Fundação de Amparo à Pesquisa do Estado de São Paulo (FAPESP) is also acknowledged.

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reading of the manuscript and suggestions and to Marcia Cristina Toledo Silva of the Núcleo de Cultura de Células for supplying the cell cultures.

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Received: 08 June 2011
Accepted: 19 December 2011