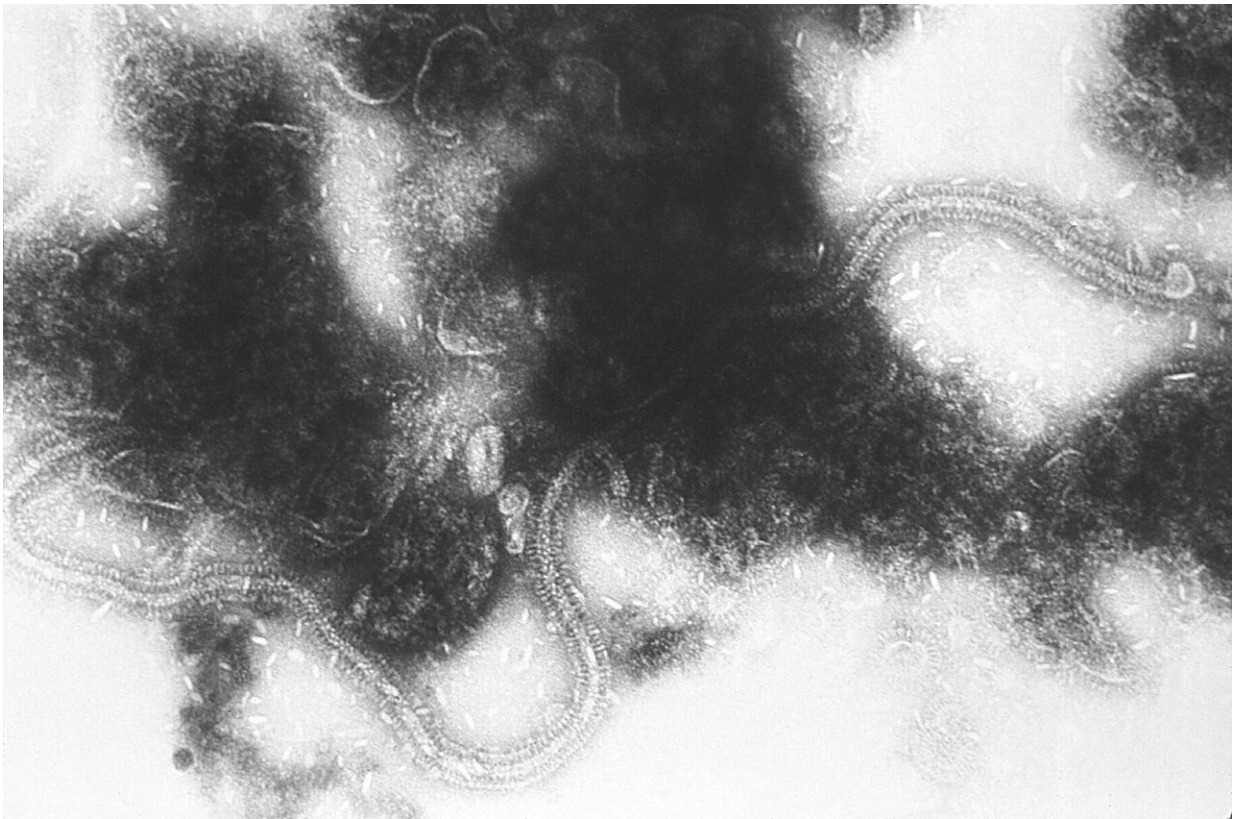


Respiratory syncytial virus transmission in the Middle East

November 18 2019, by Laura Powell



Transmission electron micrograph of RSV. Credit: CDC/ Dr. Erskine Palmer / Public Domain

Human respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) is a primary cause of lower respiratory tract infections among young children worldwide, and leads

to 60,000 deaths globally each year. A vaccine does not yet exist, although several candidates are in development.

Better [vaccine](#) and anti-viral drug design requires understanding how RSV is transmitted, including which strains dominate in a given season and how new strains emerge. Natasha Halasa, MD, MPH, Suman Das, Ph.D., and colleagues performed whole-genome sequencing on samples acquired between 2010 and 2013 in a pediatric cohort in Amman, Jordan.

They found that two virus subgroups, RSVA and RSVB, co-circulated in this region, although one subgroup was dominant each year. They also found that new introductions of RSVA spread more widely between city regions than RSVB, and that RSVA seemed to cause less severe disease.

This work, published in *Microbial Genomics*, provides valuable insight into RSV transmission dynamics in the Middle East, an under-studied region, and indicates that future vaccines should be formulated to include representative strains from both RSV subgroups.

More information: Nídia S. Trovão et al. Molecular characterization of respiratory syncytial viruses circulating in a paediatric cohort in Amman, Jordan, *Microbial Genomics* (2019). [DOI: 10.1099/mgen.0.000292](#)

Provided by Vanderbilt University

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