Pandemic H1N1 2009 in Neonates

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Sir,

I read the recent publication on pandemic H1N1 2009 in neonates with a great interest. Hon *et al.* concluded that “Emergency room and frontline staff must be vigilant of the non-specific clinical features of infections with respiratory viruses in the neonates so that prompt triage and isolation can be implemented to avoid outbreaks in the neonatal service [1].” Of the studied cases, there was no pandemic H1N1 2009 in this series [1]. I agree that the pandemic H1N1 2009 can be a serious infection among neonate but the null prevalence in this report might imply some clinical importance. It is still a myth whether neonate has some specific mechanism that brings resistance to infection. In the series of infection in pregnant subjects, the transmission to the child is very low [2]. Indeed, the first case report of neonatal pneumonia has just been published in July 2010 [3].

References

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Author's reply

Sir,

Professor Wiwanitkit's comment that it is still a myth whether neonate has some specific mechanism that brings resistance to infection is interesting. In the cited series of infection in pregnant subjects, the 5 neonates, born between 27 and 36 wks gestation, were not infected by the H1N1 [1]. In a previous series of SARS-CoV (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome - Coronavirus) infection in pregnant women, infants born to mothers with the respiratory viral infection did not acquire the infection through vertical transmission [2].

The first case report of H1N1 neonatal pneumonia has been published [3]. I wonder if there are any more cases of neonatal H1N1 elsewhere in the world. We have since managed a dozen of neonates with RSV infections in the early months of 2010 but no H1N1 to date. These neonates did not require ICU support and were only managed symptomatically.

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