

Hantavirus

Hantavirus Americans suffering from the Hantavirus dates back at least to the 1950s when about two thousand United States soldiers fighting in Korea developed the illness, then known as Korean hemorrhagic fever, according to *Killer Germs* by Barry Zimmerman and David Zimmerman. Although an intense effort was made by the U.S. Army to isolate the virus causing the fever there was no success until 1976. The first strain of Hantavirus was found in the striped field mouse. The striped field mouse does not develop an illness from the virus but other rodents do develop symptoms. One city rat found in Seoul, the capital of Korea, carried a less deadly form of the Hantavirus. In the 1980s Johns Hopkins researchers implicated the Hantavirus in cases of hypertension as well as those of chronic kidney failure, the authors of *Killer Germs* continued. In 1993 the United States, a more deadly form of the Hantavirus was carried by deer mice in four western states which after a mild winter reached epidemic portions. The deer mice then started moving into human territory in "Four Corners" in the United States where New Mexico, Colorado and Arizona and Utah had their boundaries connected, stated Zimmerman and Zimmerman in *Killer Germs*. This form of the illness caused by the Hantavirus was dubbed Hantavirus pulmonary syndrome (HPS) because of its intense involvement of the lungs. The health authorities urged people in the "Four Corners" area to set up traps and poison the deer mice that moved into human quarters. There were forty cases of the hantavirus reported in the outbreak with twenty five resulting in death, according to *Killer Germs*. As of the writing of Zimmerman and Zimmerman's book there was an antiviral for the hantavirus being developed. Park, Kim and Moon in a KeHo Park study (2004) suggested that the antiviral is somewhat protective. Sources KeHo Park, Research Institute, National Cancer Center, 809 Madu-dong, Ilsan-gu, Gyeonggi, 411-769, Republic of Korea; fax +82-31-920-2149; email: bachism@empal.com URL: <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/EID/vol10no12/04-0684.htm#cit> Zimmerman, Barry E. and Zimmerman, David J., *Killer Germs: Microbes and Diseases That Threaten Humanity*, Contemporary Books of The McGraw Hill Companies: Chicago, et al., 2007; pp 128-133.