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An overview of Crimean–Congo hemorrhagic fever in Pakistan

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Crimean-Congo Hemorrhagic Fever (CCHF) is a disease affecting domestic livestock and wild animals which can spread to humans. It is caused by infection with a tick-borne virus (Nairovirus) in the family Bunyaviridae or by contacting with infected tissues or from animal blood. CCHF cases were recorded from published data from 2013 to 2018 in different geographic regions of Pakistan. The intensity and risk factors were also determined from all four provinces of Pakistan. A total of 391 cases of CCHF have been reported from all over Pakistan during period of 2013-2018. Majority of them were recorded at the time of Eid-ul-Adha. CCHF cases were identified predominantly in Baluchistan ($n=12$), Karachi ($n=5$), Bahawalpur ($n=2$), and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa ($n=1$). The prevalence of disease were different in different areas of Pakistan (Fata 1%, Islamabad 5%, Punjab 21%, Sindh 8%, KPK 14% and Baluchistan 39%). The political disturbances faced by the Pakistan have increased Pakistan's susceptibility because large number of refugees have migrated to Pakistan from Afghanistan which is an endemic country. Most of the immigrants and their cattles from Afghanistan settled in Khyber, Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan provinces which ultimately cause higher prevalence of CCHF in these areas. Currently there is no complete cure or commercially available vaccine of CCHF available in Pakistan. Mostly Ribavirin antiviral drug is used to treat CCHF. The disease can be controlled by implementing preventive measures like avoiding contact with blood of the suspected animal and tick bites.

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