

# New respiratory poses potential threat to humans

[Science](#), [Biology](#)



There are a lot of new bacteria and viruses being discovered almost every day. Some of them are new strains of previous species while some are entirely new species that have yet to be studied and usually cause no harm to humans. However, when the Adenovirus, the causative agent of the common cold, which is not a lethal illness to most people, mutates into a new form and mysteriously kills a lot of people, this is a cause for alarm.

In this connection, according to an article written by Associated Press and was published in Quad City Times, a mutated form of the Adenovirus has killed 10 people across the United States in last 18 months. In addition, the new form, which is called Ad14, has caused 140 illnesses in states such as Washington, Texas, Oregon, and New York. The virus was first reported last year in New York City, where it killed a 12-day old girl.

Based on the article, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) was puzzled by the new strain of the Adenovirus, which has only more than 50 variants. However, they emphasized that there was no need to be alarmed as the mutated virus does not pose a serious threat to humans. Moreover, the CDC is also working on a vaccine for the virus which they hope to release in 2009.

What fascinated me most about the article is the fact that the Adenovirus, which usually causes mild forms of sicknesses, has mutated into a new and possibly, deadly form. Being a student taking up microbiology, I believe that this discovery of a mutated variant of a virus means that it is possible for other viruses, and even bacteria to mutate into a more lethal and more dangerous form. It is possible that the virus was exposed to certain factors

which altered its nutritional requirements and as a result, made it evolve like in the case of certain bacteria such as E. coli.

#### References.

Quad City Times. (November 16, 2007). New respiratory bug has killed 10 people. Retrieved December 2, 2007, from <http://qctimes.com/articles/2007/11/16//news/local/doc473e0d1de7e4d991086475.txt>