

Simian Virus 40 (SV40): A Possible Human Polyomavirus

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Simian virus 40 (SV40) is a tumor virus that was inadvertently present in polio and adenovirus vaccines between 1954 and 1960. In January 1997, a workshop was held to discuss the question posed by the recent detection of SV40 DNA in human tumors by polymerase chain reactions.

The workshop was divided into four speaker sessions:

1. Presence of SV40 and SV40 DNA in human tissues
2. Other human polyomaviruses
3. Human exposure to SV40
4. Mechanisms of SV40 oncogenesis

and three panel-audience discussions

1. Issues related to the detection of SV40 in human tissues
2. SV40 as a putative human commensal
3. SV40 as an oncogenic virus and possible human pathogen

In spite of reassuring epidemiological data presented at the workshop indicating no increase in neoplastic diseases in humans exposed to SV40-contaminated polio vaccines, a consensus emerged that further initiatives should be implemented to resolve the questions raised by this problem.

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Bibliography of Suggested Texts

Lewis, A.M., Jr.: Meeting Summary and Concluding Remarks