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ISOLATION OF VEROCYTOTOXIGENIC ESCHERICHIA (VTEC) O157 AND NON O157 VTEC SEROTYPES IN DIARRHOEIC AND APPARENTLY HEALTHY HUMANS IN ABUJA, NIGERIA

Enem Simon Ikechukwu*

*University of Abuja, Nigeria

Globally, Verocytotoxigenic Escherichia coli (VTEC) have been known as an important foodborne pathogen causing the substantial proportion of human illness. An analysis of human faecal samples from both diarrhea and apparently healthy patients from hospitals in Abuja, Nigeria were carried out using standard microbiological methods to isolate various serotypes of VTEC. Confirmed E. coli isolates were sub-cultured into cefixime-tellurite sorbitol McConkey (CT-SMAC) agar and further characterized using commercially procured latex agglutination test kits. Out of the 372 samples collected, 193 were from diarrhea patients and 3 samples tested positive for VTEC O157 while 2 were positive for non O157 VTEC. The remaining 179 samples were from apparently healthy patients and one tested positive for VTEC O157 while 2 were for non O157 VTEC. Two hundred and twenty well structured closed ended questionnaires, pre-tested for validity were distributed to respondents to ascertain their association with food and food products of animal origin (cattle in particular). Of the 112 valid and returned questionnaires, 35 agreed strongly, 15 agreed, 20 were undecided, 12 disagreed and 30 strongly disagreed to have associated with food of animal origin. The isolation of various VTEC serotypes illustrates the significance of studying the broader group of VTEC organisms from a public health perspective. There is a strong indication that humans get infected by consuming contaminated beef and beef products. Proper personal and environmental hygiene should be observed in order to curb and control the prevalence of VTEC.

Biography

Enem Simon Ikechukwu is a Ph.D holder and a senior Lecturer at the Department of Veterinary Public Health and Preventive Medicine, University of Abuja, Nigeria where he served as the immediate past Head of Department. He has over 20 journal publications to his credit and has attended many conferences both locally and internationally. He has served as a reviewer to some journals. He has passion for research.

simon.enem@uniabuja.edu.ng

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