

Viruses infecting bivalve molluscs



Bivalve molluscs are filter feeders and as a consequence they may bioaccumulate in their tissues viruses that infect humans and higher vertebrates. However, there have also been described mortalities of bivalve molluscs associated with viruses belonging to different families. Mass mortalities of adult Portuguese oysters, *Crassostrea angulata*, among French livestock (between 1967 and 1973) were associated with irido-like virus infections. Herpesviruses were reported in the eastern oyster, Pacific oyster and European flat oyster and lately in scallops and clams. Disseminated neoplasia, a proliferative cell disorder of the circulatory system of bivalves, although of uncertain aetiology, has been suggested to be caused by retroviral infections. Other viruses described in bivalves are interpreted as members of the Papovaviridae, Togaviridae, Reoviridae, Birnaviridae and Picornaviridae. However, the lack of bivalve cell lines renders difficult virus isolation from molluscs although some viruses can be isolated in fish cell lines.

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