

Nosocomial transmission of rotavirus from patients admitted with diarrhea

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We studied the transmission of rotavirus (RV) in 950 patients under 2 years of age hospitalized for diarrhea in Santiago, Chile. Stool samples were collected every other day from all patients during their entire hospital stay. To trace nosocomial transmission, we mapped the ward at the time of detection of RV. Comparative study by polyacrylamide gel electrophoresis of 315 RV isolates (180 detected upon admission of patients and 135 attributed to nosocomial transmission) allowed the identification of 18 different electropherotypes. An electropherotype similar to that of a community-acquired case was found in the same room in 81% of nosocomial cases and in the ward in 92% of nosocomial cases. It was concluded that the infants admitted shedding RV are the major source of nosocomial transmission and there was not a RV strain that was particularly transmissible.