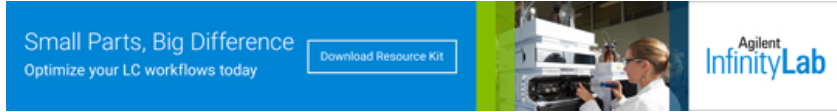


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Studies suggest dengue may provide some immunity against COVID-19: Experts

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Researchers in Brazil have found that places with lower coronavirus infection rates and slower case growth were locations that had suffered intense dengue outbreaks this year or last year in Brazil. This suggests dengue may provide some immunity against COVID-19.

This striking finding raises the intriguing possibility of an immunological cross-reactivity between dengue's flavivirus serotypes and SARS-CoV, according to experts. "This indicates that there is an immunological interaction between two viruses that nobody could have expected, because the two viruses are from completely different families," said the author of study Dr Nicoletis.

Study published in London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, describes co-infection of dengue fever and COVID-19. In tropical countries like India, where arboviruses and COVID-19 may coexist, clinical diagnosis is difficult, and the experts have advised for the patients to be tested for both viruses.

Dengue viruses and the COVID-19 virus can cause similar symptoms in the early stages. And mixed infection of both COVID-19 and dengue is a reality and can cause havoc for the patients. The patient presented a quite severe dengue infection and thus gave birth to the hypothesis that SARS-CoV-2 infection is more likely to give more severe symptoms in the case of co-infection. Of course, larger studies are needed to evaluate increased morbidity of these co-infections, according to Dr Nitin Malekar, geneticist and healthcare communication expert.

"Previous studies have shown that people with dengue antibodies in their blood can test falsely positive for COVID-19 antibodies even if they have never been infected by the coronavirus," according to Dr Narendra Saini, chairman, scientific committee, Delhi Medical Council (DMC), chairman anti microbial resistance (AMR committee), Indian Medical Association (IMA) Headquarters.

"It is too early to comment on this Brazilian research as the study is still not verified. Nevertheless, you cannot still blindly believe the research as last year Karnataka had 2,455 dengue patients still COVID 19 is on the higher side in the state. Similar is the case with Maharashtra," Ahmedabad based pharma consultant Dr Sanjay Agrawal further explained.

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