Emerging Influenza: Consideration in Transfusion Medicine

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Sir, the problem of pathogen contamination in blood and blood products is usually a big concern in transfusion medicine. There are many infectious particles that are considered blood-borne pathogen that can be transmitted via transfusion. The present new emerging influenza, H7N9, which is a focused viral infection on its possible pandemic should be discussed on its feasibility to transmit via transfusion. Wang et al. [1] noted that “there is little known about influenza viremia, and whether influenza viruses can be transmitted by blood or blood derived samples” and performed an interesting study to trace the stability and infectivity of influenza virus in blood. Of interest, Wang et al. [1] found the feasibility of transmission of virus via blood. In fact, the viremia during influenza is confirmed and this should be specially focused in transfusion medicine [2]. Contamination of influenza in blood products is a new topic for donor study [3]. In general, the possibility of blood transfusion transmission of influenza should be very low since the febrile patient is normally prohibited from blood donation. Focusing on the present novel H7N9 influenza, an important concern is some cases are mild and not febrile [4]. If there is no good preventive concern, the chance that an asymptomatic cases of H7N9 influenza can cause transmission of virus via

blood donation. This topic is very challenging and can be the focus for further study in transfusion medicine.

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