



Emerging and Reemerging Infectious Diseases, Region of the Americas

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Yellow Fever Epizootic Confirmed in the State of Monagas, Venezuela

The Ministry of Health of Venezuela received a report on 27 February 2004 (Epidemiological Week/EW 8) on the death of monkeys in the town of Caserío El Salto, along the Morichal Largo river near the city of Maturín, Monagas state.

Due to the threat that the epizootic might have been caused by the yellow fever virus, health authorities immediately took the necessary measures for epizootic and epidemiological surveillance, vaccination against yellow fever, and social mobilization.

Ecological investigation confirmed deaths among primates. A total of 13 Araguato monkeys (*Alouatta sp.*) were captured, and samples were taken from them for laboratory examination. Also captured were mosquitoes and other wild animals, and sentinel hamsters were utilized. In addition, samples were taken of febrile and asymptomatic residents of the area, with a review of local morbidity and mortality resulting from jaundice and icteric febrile diseases.

At the same time, a campaign of mass vaccination was carried out in the affected municipality and among the city residents. Over 296,656 doses of vaccine against yellow fever were administered in the state of Monagas, reaching coverage levels of over 91%. Additionally, the vaccination was extended to the states of Anzoategui, Delta Amacuro, and Sucre.

On 21 May 2004, the laboratory reported having isolated the yellow fever virus in a sample from one (1) of the primates. Up to now, no human cases have been reported.

Source: Report to PAHO from the Ministry of Health of Venezuela.