

Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease (RHD) in six indoor pet rabbits diagnosed in the same week in Portugal: a case series

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Introduction

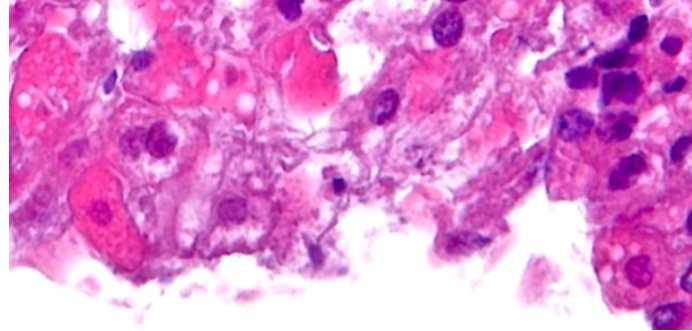
Rabbit hemorrhagic disease (RHD) is one of the main infectious diseases in exotic animal medicine. RHD is a highly contagious disease, leading to an acute fatal hepatitis in rabbits (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*), caused by the RHD virus (RHDV).

This virus has:

- High mortality rate
- Novel strains and differential clinical courses
- Worldwide distribution
- Ability to infect pet, farm and wild rabbits

Objectives

- Highlight the high infectivity of RHDV
- Denote to the nonspecific clinical presentations that the new strains can trigger
- Discuss the appropriated vaccination measures

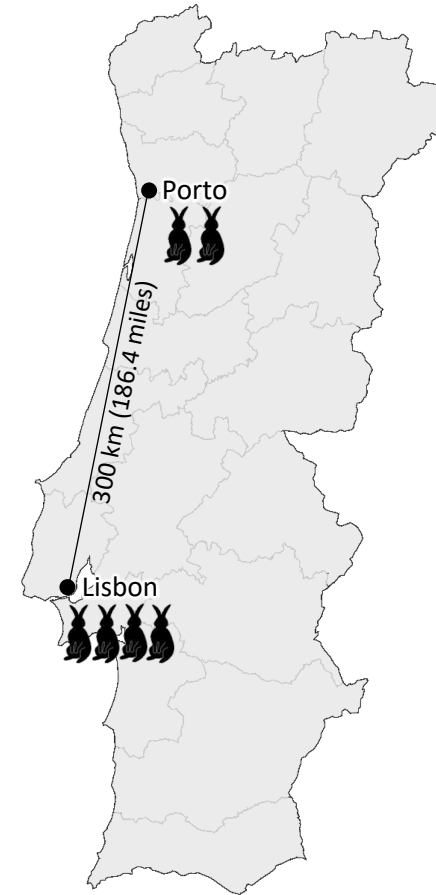


Material and methods

Six pet rabbits were identified in Portugal in the two largest cities (Lisbon and Porto) in the same week. After an anamnesis and physical examination, other complementary tests were performed. In all cases, a RT-PCR liver sampling for RHDV was performed.

Results

All rabbits showed nonspecific clinical signs, with acute fatal courses, and positive results by RT-PCR were associated to high amounts of genetic material of RHDV serotype 2 (GI.2), an emergent serotype.



Conclusion

- After the emergence of novel RHDV2 (GI.2), different clinical presentations have been reported, as we present here
- All RHD suspicious cases should be carefully evaluated.
- All pet rabbits should be vaccinated against classical RHDV, RHDV2 (GI.2) and myxomatosis.



References

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