

HUMAN CORONA VIRUS

DISCOVERIES



1965

Researchers at the Common Cold Research Unit in Wiltshire, UK, report cultivating a virus, B814, from a boy with a cold. They describe the pathogen as “virtually unrelated to any other known virus of the human respiratory tract.”



1966

Dorothy Hamre and John Procknow of the University of Chicago describe a virus, which they dub 229E, isolated from a medical student with a cold. It is distinct from other known respiratory viruses.



1967

Scientists at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases report using the same methods used to culture B814 to grow another new human virus with a similar morphology. They name the virus OC43.



1968

Eight researchers, including the discoverers of B814, 229E, and OC43 and June Almeida, who first imaged coronaviruses, write to *Nature* to propose that these and several other recently isolated human viruses belong to a new category, coronaviruses. These viruses, they say, have a “characteristic ‘fringe’ of projections 200 Å long, which are rounded or petal shaped . . . recalling the solar corona . . .” (Samples of B814 and the unnamed other viruses are no longer available for study, but Jeffrey Kahn of UT Southwestern Medical Center suggests they may have been the same cold-causing coronaviruses that were characterized and named in the mid-2000s.)



2003

An international group of researchers reports that the outbreak of severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS), which began in late 2002 in southern China, is caused by a newly emerged human coronavirus.



2004

Researchers at Erasmus Medical Center in the Netherlands report isolating a coronavirus, later named NL63, from a child with pneumonia.



2005

A group of researchers based at the University of Hong Kong discovers another coronavirus, HKU1, in samples from two patients with pneumonia.



2012

Researchers at Erasmus Medical Center and their colleagues identify a new coronavirus, later named MERS-CoV, that was isolated from a man in Saudi Arabia with pneumonia and kidney failure.



2020

A team of researchers in China identify the cause of a disease outbreak in Wuhan as a novel coronavirus, now known as SARS-CoV-2.