



Emerging and Reemerging Infectious Diseases, Region of the Americas

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Epizootic in Los Besotes Ecological Park (Valledupar, Cesar, Colombia)

Following the epidemic in Colombia last year, with a total of 82 cases and 35 deaths as of 31 December 2003, the presence of a yellow fever epizootic was confirmed on that same day among monkeys in Los Besotes Ecological Park in the federal Department of Cesar. Also in this Department, four human cases of yellow fever were confirmed during said epidemic; and a previous epizootic occurred in the vicinity of the Maracas River, near the Campo Alegre indigenous reservation, in the city of Beceril.

The isolation of the yellow fever virus in samples from two monkeys in the park brought about an investigation as well as the formation of an interdisciplinary team to elaborate and carry out a contingency plan. Following a visit to the park, the team identified 10 additional dead monkeys from 3 different groups. During this past week, however, there have been no additional deaths.

The measures taken to deal with the situation include broadening vaccination coverage to 100%, to include the entire urban and rural population one year of age and older; vector control in urban areas as well as entomological surveillance studies; strengthening epidemiological surveillance to detect human cases, along with training health-care personnel in adequate techniques for the diagnosis, management, surveillance and control of yellow fever; and educational measures for the population of Valledupar.

The situation has shed considerable light on the importance of active surveillance of this disease in order to activate comprehensive prevention and control measures to prepare for situations of major severity.

For more information, please consult the following:

- *Alertas*: Situación nacional sobre fiebre amarilla—Brote de fiebre amarilla en Norte de Santander. Bogotá: Instituto Nacional de Salud de Colombia. (*Alerts*: National Situation of Yellow Fever—Outbreak of Yellow Fever in the North of Santander. Bogotá: National Institute of Health of Colombia. In Spanish.)

- [*EID Weekly Updates: Emerging and Reemerging Infectious Diseases, Region of the Americas. Vol. 1, No. 24–18 December 2003.*](#) Washington, DC: Pan American Health Organization / World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO).

Source: Informe sobre epizootia en el Parque Ecológico Los Besotes, Municipio de Valledupar-Cesar, diciembre 2003. Bogotá: Instituto Nacional de Salud de Colombia. (Report on Epizootic in Los Besotes Ecological Park, City of Valledupar-Cesar, December 2003. Bogotá: National Institute of Health of Colombia. In Spanish.)