



Physiological and Pathophysiological Aspects of Endogenous Viruses

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Message from the Guest Editors

The genomes of higher eukaryotes contain thousands of sequences with sequence similarity to viruses. For instance, endogenous retroviruses are common contaminants of vertebrate genomes and endogenous caulimoviruses can be found regularly in genomes of flowering plants. Such sequences are considered to be remnants of germ line infections with exogenous viruses. Usually these sequences do not allow the synthesis of complete virions but some of them contain open reading frames that allow the translation of individual proteins. In addition, regulatory elements from these endogenous viruses can influence gene expression in the host cell. Only few sequences, e.g. the syncytins in mammals, have known functions. However, growing evidence indicates that endogenous viruses and related elements are involved in many physiological and pathophysiological processes ranging from immune-modulation to cancer and autoimmunity.

We invite authors who are experts in this field to contribute original articles or review articles that are not yet published or that are not currently under review by other journals.





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