



Examining the Link between SARS-CoV-2 and Stroke

Bramwell Caelum*

Department of Pathology, University Malaysia Sabah, Malaysia

DESCRIPTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has profoundly impacted global health, revealing numerous complications associated with SARS-CoV-2 infection, including its potential link to stroke. As healthcare professionals and researchers continue to unravel the multifaceted effects of the virus, understanding the relationship between SARS-CoV-2 and stroke has become critical. A meta-umbrella review synthesizes existing studies on this topic, providing a comprehensive overview of the evidence and offering insights into the underlying mechanisms, risk factors, and clinical implications. Recent research has indicated that COVID-19 may be associated with an increased incidence of stroke among infected individuals. Several studies have reported that patients with severe COVID-19 exhibit higher rates of both ischemic and hemorrhagic strokes compared to those without the virus. This association raises important questions about the mechanisms through which SARS-CoV-2 may contribute to cerebrovascular events. One of the proposed mechanisms involves the virus's effect on the vascular system. SARS-CoV-2 is known to enter human cells via the ACE2 receptor, which plays a crucial role in regulating blood pressure and vascular function. Infection may lead to endothelial dysfunction, inflammation, and thrombus formation, all of which can increase the risk of stroke. Inflammatory responses triggered by the virus can result in hypercoagulability, a condition where the blood's ability to clot is enhanced, further contributing to the development of ischemic strokes. Additionally, the meta-umbrella review highlights that certain patient demographics may be more susceptible to stroke following COVID-19 infection. Older adults and individuals with pre-existing conditions, such as hypertension, diabetes, and cardiovascular diseases, are at heightened risk. These comorbidities not only increase the likelihood of severe COVID-19 but also exacerbate the effects of the virus on the vascular system. Understanding these risk factors is essential for healthcare providers to identify patients

who may require closer monitoring and intervention. The review also underscores the importance of timely diagnosis and management of stroke in COVID-19 patients. Given the overlapping symptoms of COVID-19 and stroke, such as altered consciousness or difficulty speaking, healthcare professionals must remain vigilant. Rapid identification and treatment of stroke can significantly impact patient outcomes, highlighting the need for integrated care pathways that address both COVID-19 and its neurological complications. Furthermore, the relationship between SARS-CoV-2 and stroke raises questions about long-term consequences. Some studies suggest that even mild COVID-19 cases may have lingering effects on vascular health, potentially increasing the risk of future cerebrovascular events. This underscores the importance of follow-up care for COVID-19 survivors, particularly those with risk factors for stroke. In conclusion, the association between SARS-CoV-2 and stroke is a critical area of research with significant clinical implications. The meta-umbrella review provides valuable insights into the mechanisms linking COVID-19 to cerebrovascular events, the demographic factors influencing risk, and the need for vigilant diagnosis and management. As research continues to evolve, understanding this association will be vital for developing effective prevention strategies and improving patient care for those affected by COVID-19. Moving forward, interdisciplinary collaboration among healthcare professionals, neurologists, and researchers will be essential to address the complexities of this relationship and mitigate the long-term impacts of the pandemic on cerebrovascular health.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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Corresponding author Bramwell Caelum, Department of Pathology, University Malaysia Sabah, Malaysia, E-mail: Bramwell-Caelum3663@yahoo.com

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