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## **Serodiagnosis of human herpesvirus 8 in women with breast cancer**

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**H**uman herpesvirus 8 (HHV-8) is a common virus in the Mediterranean region. It has been linked to a number of malignancies, and it is believed to be the causative agent in certain cases. The aim of this study was to evaluate the distribution and possible association between HHV-8 and breast carcinoma, and to assess the risk factors associated with an HHV-8 infection. A total of 90 blood samples were collected. Forty-five of these patients were recently diagnosed with breast cancer and presented at the Oncology Centre in Basra, with ages ranging from 28 to 68 years old. Forty-five apparently

healthy females made up the control group, with ages ranging from 25 to 70 years old. The HHV-8 immunoglobulin G (IgG) antibody detection was done using an ELISA with previously stored sera. HHV-8 was detected in 31.1% of the women with breast cancer, and a statistically significant difference was determined. The highest HHV-8 seropositivity (17.8%) was seen in the 51–60 years old age group, and significant differences were found between the patient and control groups with regard to the different age groups. Invasive ductal carcinoma was the most common type of breast malignancy in the women, with the majority of the patients classified as stage II. The histopathological types had a significant effect on the outcome proportion of the HHV-8 IgG antibodies. Fourteen of breast cancer patients with blood transfusion

histories, 6.7% were HHV-8 IgG antibody positive, indicating a significant difference. Diabetes mellitus was determined to be one risk factor associated with a high seropositivity of HHV-8, it occurred at a rate of 13.3% among women with breast cancer ( $p < 0.05$ ). In addition, the sexual route may be a significant risk factor. However, the HHV-8 infected breast cancer patients showed no statistically significant association with the coexistence of breast cancer markers. Based on the results of this study, female breast cancer may be associated with HHV-8. A blood transfusion, diabetes mellitus and marriage were found to be risk factors for acquired HHV-8 infections in breast cancer patients.

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