

DTU Holds a Hepatitis E Virus Seminar

Professor Thomas Bock, a research fellow at the Robert Koch Institute (RKI) in Berlin, is highly regarded internationally for his studies of infectious diseases, using molecular epidemiology. On March 16th, he held a seminar at DTU entitled “The Hepatitis E Virus: An Underestimated and Newly Emerging Infectious Disease of the Liver”. His visit may result in a collaboration between DTU and RKI to conduct further research on HEV - the most common cause of acute viral hepatitis in developing countries.



Professor Bock meets with the DTU Institute of Research and Development

Professor Bock gave an overview of HEV, explaining how it is transmitted, its geographic distribution and its prevalence in developing countries. HEV was first discovered in the 1980s. It is a major cause of illness and death in the developing world and a disproportionate cause of death among pregnant women. The virus was not initially thought to occur in developed countries, but recent reports have shown this theory to be mistaken.

Several large and periodic epidemics have been reported in India, Russia, China, Africa and Mexico. In Vietnam, 1,300 cases were reported after the heavy rains of 1994.



Professor Bock speaks at the seminar

Professor Bock said: *“Thanks to the DTU Institute of Research and Development for your warm welcome. I am delighted to see that DTU has expressed a deep concern about the Hepatitis E virus and is prepared to start some research on it. Hopefully, some new ideas will come out of the seminar and it will be an excellent starting point for a partnership between DTU and RKI.”*

Dr. Nguyen Minh Hung of the DTU Institute of Research and Development, said: *“I visited the Department of Infectious Diseases at RKI in 2013 and conducted research into the genotype of the Hepatitis D virus. Professor Bock’s visit to DTU plays an important role in kick-starting our research projects on the HEV and many other infectious diseases at DTU and, at the same time, in enhancing the partnership between DTU and Robert Koch Institute.”*

(Media Center)