

Spread of zoonotic diseases: Are we to blame?

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ABSTRACT

Summary: Prevalence of zoonotic diseases is increasing globally, one good example is COVID-19. Zoonosis (also known as zoonoses and zoonotic diseases) are infectious diseases caused by bacteria, viruses and parasites that spread between animals (usually vertebrates) and humans. Zoonotic transmission can occur in any context in which there is companionship (pets), economic (farming, etc.), predatory (hunting, butchering or consuming wild game) or research contact with or consumption of animals, animal products or animal derivatives. Studies have shown that 60% of human infectious diseases are zoonotic and about 75% of emerging infectious diseases of human have an animal origin. In Malaysia, zoonotic disease as part of emerging diseases may significantly impact health, social and economic facets of everyday life. So, reducing the risk of zoonosis should be prioritized by at all levels. Evidence has shown that to be effective in controlling zoonosis, we have to control and prevent it from the source i.e. from the animals. Interface which requires a one health approach involving effective communication, collaboration and coordination among human, animal and environmental health sectors.