



Changing epidemiology of TBE in Germany and its impact for travellers

Gerhard Dobler¹

¹*Bundeswehr institute of Microbiology*

Tick-borne encephalitis (TBE) is the most important tick-borne viral infection in Europe and also in Germany. During the last years a trend of increasing human cases of TBE in Germany is reported. An analysis of the geographic distribution of human TBE cases in Germany shows that human cases are increasingly occurring in mountainous areas of the Alpien mountains and also of the German Central Highlands, where only few years ago no human cases had been observed. In the former highly endemic area of Lower Franconia reports of human TBE cases decreased fourfold from 36 reported cases (2006) to 9 cases (2017), while in the former low-endemic region of Suebia in the number of reported cases increased more than 3fold from 2006 (6 cases) to 2017 (20 cases). In the last years increasing numbers of human TBE cases have been observed in city parks and gardens. About 10% of all human cases occur in so-called non-endemic areas of Germany. During the period of 2006 to 2017 the number of human cases occurred an average of 3 weeks earlier. The changing epidemiology of TBE in Germany has impact also for travelers . Travelers should be vaccinated when visiting Germany early in spring and also when visiting mountainous areas which have been supposed to be TBE-free in the past. During visits with extensive contact to nature travelers should consider TBE vaccination also when outside of registered TBE endemic areas.