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Prevalence of herpesvirus type I in the bitch population of Campos Gerais area at Paraná State, Brazil.

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Canine herpesvirus type 1 (CaHV-1) is an *Alphaherpesvirus* associated with infertility in bitches, and which can cause fatal disease in newborn puppies. Like other members of the family, CaHV-1 causes unapparent or latent infection, facilitating large scale viral transmission between canines.¹ Diagnosis is based on characteristic lesions observed through necropsy, demonstration of viral antigens in tissue sections using the immunofluorescence technique, virus isolation and PCR.² The aim of this work was to perform an epidemiological survey in dogs without clinical signs of CaHV-1 infection. For this purpose, 40 bitches undergoing surgical sterilization as part of a population control program were used. Immediately after the ovariohysterectomy, a swab was rubbed into the eye mucosa and deposited in a tube containing sterile solution. The same procedure was performed for the vaginal mucosa. The samples were kept frozen at -80°C until analyses. Extraction of nucleic acids was performed per *pool*, which was determined by mixing samples of the same animal, using 10% sodium dodecyl sulfate detergent and proteinase K, followed by the method described by Boom et al³. Briefly, a forward (CCTAAACCTACTTCGGATGA) and a reverse (GGCTTTAAATGAACCTTCTCTGG) primer were utilized, which amplified a 450bp fragment of the glycoprotein B gene. CaHV-1 positive samples from the genomic bank of the State University of Londrina laboratory of animal virology, were used as a positive control and nuclease-free ultrapure water as a negative control. The PCR products were analyzed through electrophoresis in 2% agarose gel stained with ethidium bromide and then viewed under ultraviolet light and photographed. The results demonstrated amplification of only the positive control. In this survey no dogs were actively shedding CaHV-1 at the time of sample collection as determined by PCR. However, these results do not differentiate a truly unaffected bitch from one with a latent infection. Through this preliminary investigation, it would appear that the prevalence of CaHV-1 in Campos Gerais area at Paraná State is low.