



Afebrile Wuhan Coronavirus Infection and Expected False Negative of Thermoscanning for Screening of Immigrant

Dear Editor,

Wuhan coronavirus infection is a new emerging disease that becomes a global problem. After its first emergence in China in December 2019, it spread to several countries in the early 2020.^{1,2} The continuous spread in the imported countries is reported.³ At present, the important preventive measure against this new disease in countries that there is still no disease is the use of immigrant screening. The basic tool is thermoscanning. However, thermoscanning focuses on fever detection. The false negative due to afebrile infection is possible.

Here, the authors reappraised on the available data on patients with Wuhan coronavirus infection⁴ to estimate the expected rate of the afebrile infected case. Based on the available data on 99 cases, the fever is seen in 82 cases,⁴ the estimated afebrile infection rate is equal to 17.17% (95% confidence interval = 11.14%–26.47%). Therefore, there is high rate of false-negative results from thermoscanning for the screening of immigrants. This can result in possible further spread in new countries and the chain of continuous spread to the third country is possible. In fact, there is already a case of novel infection detected in Korea in a patient without a history of travel to China but with a history of travel to Thailand, where the disease is already imported from China.

In conclusion, the use of thermoscanning for the screening of immigrant might not sufficient for effective prevention of imported Wuhan coronavirus infection.

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Conflicts of interest

There are no conflicts of interest.

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