

Table of contents

1	General Introduction.....	1
1.1	Hepatitis E & HEV.....	1
1.2	Virology.....	1
1.3	Taxonomy.....	3
1.4	Waterborne Outbreaks.....	7
1.5	Zoonotic Transmission.....	9
1.6	Clinical Aspects.....	11
1.7	Diagnosis.....	14
1.8	Prevention & Treatment.....	17
2	Aims and Objectives.....	17
3	Materials and Methods.....	18
4	General Results and Discussion.....	19
4.1	Development of Molecular Tools for HEV Characterization.....	19
4.2	Molecular Epidemiology of Circulating HEV Variants.....	22
4.2.1	In Germany.....	22
4.2.2	In Switzerland.....	25
4.2.3	In Nigeria.....	27
4.3	Discovery of Novel HEV Variants in Wild Animals.....	31
4.4	Future Prospects.....	35
5	References.....	37
6	List of Manuscripts.....	48
6.1	Manuscript 1-7.....	49
6.2	Manuscript 2-7.....	65
6.3	Manuscript 3-7.....	73
6.4	Manuscript 4-7.....	76
6.5	Manuscript 5-7.....	83
6.6	Manuscript 6-7.....	87
6.7	Manuscript 7-7.....	103
7	Appendix.....	114
7.1	Publications and Presentations.....	114