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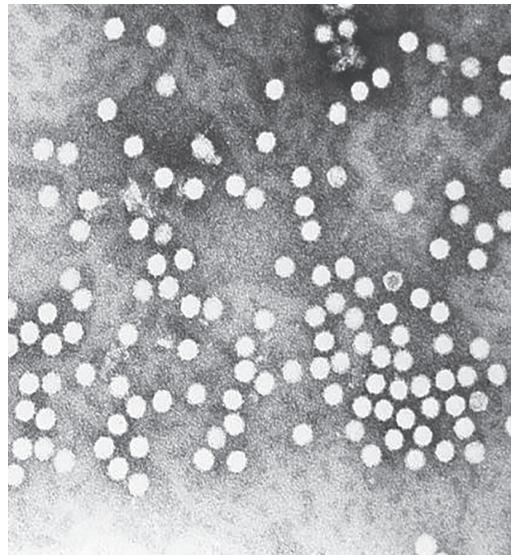
# etymologia

## Parvovirus [pah'r' vo-vi''res]

Eduardo Kaiser Ururahy Nunes Fonseca

Viruses of the family *Parvoviridae* (Latin *parvum* [meaning small or tiny]) are among the smallest viruses described, 18–28 nm in diameter. There are 2 subfamilies of the family *Parvoviridae*: *Parvovirinae* and *Densovirina* (Latin *denso* [thick or compact]). *Parvovirinae* may infect humans, but *Densovirina* infect only arthropods. Structurally, these viruses are non-enveloped, icosahedral viruses that contain a single-stranded linear DNA genome.

The small size of these viruses might account for their late discovery. In 1974, the first pathogenic human parvovirus was discovered and named B19 from the coding of a serum sample, number 19 in panel B, that gave anomalous results during testing for hepatitis B. Although human B19 infections are more often asymptomatic or lead to mild rash illnesses and arthralgias, they can also cause severe anemia in fetuses and in persons with underlying hemoglobinopathies.



This electron micrograph depicts a number of parvovirus H-1 virions of the family *Parvoviridae* of DNA viruses. Photo CDC/R. Regnery; E. L. Palmer, 1981.

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