

Publication

Bartonella interactions with endothelial cells and erythrocytes

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Author(s) Dehio, C

Author(s) at UniBasel [Dehio, Christoph](#) ;

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Bartonella species are emerging human pathogens responsible for a wide range of clinical manifestations, including Carrion's disease, trench fever, cat-scratch disease, bacillary angiomatosis-peliosis, endocarditis and bacteraemia. During infection of their human or animal reservoir host(s), these arthropod-borne pathogens typically invade and persistently colonize mature erythrocytes. However, in both reservoir and incidentally infected hosts, endothelial cells are target cells for bartonellae. Endothelial interactions involve a unique mode of cellular invasion, the activation of a proinflammatory phenotype and the formation of vasoproliferative tumours. Based on the establishment of bacterial genetics and appropriate infection models, recent work has begun to elucidate the cell and molecular biology of these unusual pathogen-host cell interactions.

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