

9 November 2021

**Official Information Act Request: Purification of Marburg Viruses**

On 13 October 2021 you sent a request for information under the Official Information Act 1982 to ESR as follows:

*“All studies and/or reports in the possession, custody or control of the ESR describing the purification of any “Marburgviruses” (for example: via filtration, ultracentrifugation and chromatography), directly from a sample taken from a diseased human where the patient sample was not first combined with any other source of genetic material (i.e. monkey kidney cells aka Vero cells; fetal bovine serum).*

*Please note that I am not requesting studies/reports where researchers failed to purify the suspected “virus” and instead:*

- cultured an unpurified sample or other unpurified substance, and/or*
- performed an amplification test (i.e. a PCR test) on all the RNA from a patient sample or from a cell culture, or on genetic material from any unpurified substance, and/or*
- fabricated a “genome” by editing/assembling/aligning sequences detected in the total RNA from a patient sample or from a cell culture or from any unpurified substance, and/or*
- produced electron microscopy images of unpurified things.*

*For further clarity, please note I am already aware that according to virus theory a “virus” requires host cells in order to replicate, and I am not requesting records describing the replication of a “virus” without host cells.*

*Further, I am not requesting records that describe a suspected “virus” floating in a vacuum; I am simply requesting records that describe its purification (separation from everything else in the patient sample, as per standard laboratory practices for the purification of other very small things).*

*Please also note that my request is not limited to records that were authored by the ESR or that pertain to work done at/by the ESR. Rather, my request includes any record matching the above description, for example (but not limited to): any published peer-reviewed study authored by anyone, anywhere, ever that has been downloaded or printed by the ESR and relied on as evidence of a disease-causing “virus”.*

*If any records match the above description of requested records and are currently available to the public elsewhere, please provide enough information about each record so that I may identify and access each one with certainty (i.e. title, author(s), date, journal, where the public may access it). Please provide URLs where possible.”*

**Our response to your request:**

Using the definition of 'purification' that you refer to in your request, ESR does not hold any information related to the 'purification' of Marburg viruses.

We cannot provide papers that staff in ESR have downloaded or printed which may apply to your request using your definition of 'purification' as the information cannot be made available without substantial collation or research pursuant to section 18(f) of the Act. We have considered section 18A of the Act and consider that even if we were to charge you for the time to check and collate any relevant materials and extend the timeframe of the request, this would still unduly affect our team who are supporting New Zealand's COVID-19 response work.

**Your right to seek a review**

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or freephone 0800 802 602.

Thank you for your request.

Yours sincerely



Jill Vintiner  
**Joint General Manager Health and Environment Group – Health  
ESR**