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Ozel M, Pauli G, Gelderblom HR.

Robert Koch-Institut des Bundesgesundheitsamtes, Berlin.

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The organization of envelope projections (knobs) of four different isolates of the human immunodeficiency virus types 1 and 2 (HIV-1 and -2) was studied using surface replica and thin section electron microscopy (EM) in combination with rotational image enhancement. All HIV strains show an identical organization of knobs on the virus envelope. The surface of an 'ideal", well-preserved HIV particle is studded with 72 knobs arranged in a T = 7 laevo symmetry. The role of the p 17 protein, which is coating the inner leaflet of the viral envelope, is discussed as a matrix protein functioning as a scaffold for the envelope and its projections during morphogenesis as well as with mature virions.

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Morphogenesis and morphology of HIV. Structure-function relations.

Gelderblom HR, Ozel M, Pauli G.

Robert Koch-Institut, Berlin.

Fine structure and antigenic make-up analysis of HIV were combined in a 2D model, from which functional aspects can be deduced. On the envelope 72 probably trimeric surface knobs (gp120) are connected to the virion via the transmembrane protein gp41. Gp120 is shed during ageing of the virion, but host cell antigens stay firmly anchored to the envelope. Underneath the envelope, p17 forms the matrix protein layer, while the capsid of the double cone shaped core is built up of p24. The relation between biochemical findings and morphogenesis and maturation of HIV as well as aspects of pathogenesis and vaccination are discussed.

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