



Wednesday, May 19, 2021
At 15:15 – 16:45
Online

Leen Delang

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Antiviral therapies for emerging RNA viruses: combatting arboviruses and SARS-CoV-2

Abstract: Only a limited panel of antiviral drugs is currently available for the treatment of infections with herpesviruses, hepatitis B and C viruses, HIV, and influenza viruses. On the other hand, no antiviral drugs have been developed and marketed for a multitude of medically important viruses, including coronaviruses and mosquito-borne viruses such as dengue virus and chikungunya virus.

Although it is in principle possible to develop antiviral drugs against each virus separately, as has been done earlier for HIV and HCV, this would not be economically viable. Therefore, broader-acting antiviral drugs could be a prime strategy to cope with the challenge of emerging viruses. In this presentation, Dr. Leen Delang will discuss the development of small-molecule antiviral drugs and animal infection models for the mosquito-borne chikungunya virus and for SARS-CoV-2.

Leen Delang is an assistant professor in virology at the Rega Institute for Medical Research at KU Leuven. Her research group studies new strategies to treat or prevent mosquito-borne virus infections. Since the start of the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic, she has been involved in the search for antiviral therapies to treat COVID-19 patients. Furthermore, she is a member of the Corona Task Force of KU Leuven and the COVID-19 workgroup of Metaforum, the interdisciplinary KU Leuven think tank.

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