

**Karl M. Johnson, M.D. 2011  
Ed Nowakowski Sr. Memorial Clinical Virology Award  
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Karl M. Johnson, M.D., studied botany at Oberlin College and medicine at the University of Rochester. Two years of training in internal medicine at Columbia University were succeeded by a soft landing in the laboratory of Robert Chanock at the National Institutes of Health.

After researching the emerging swarm of viruses causing acute respiratory disease (parainfluenza 4, five rhinoviruses, Coxsackie A21), he took his leave from Bethesda to work in a small NIH field laboratory in the Panama Canal Zone. From that base he became intimately acquainted with the first of several new agents causing hemorrhagic fever, Machupo virus, from the llanos of eastern Bolivia. Working on Machupo virus with Fred Murphy at the CDC, their team described a new virus family designated the Arenaviridae. Subsequent adventures in Africa and Korea were mounted from CDC, where Dr. Johnson established the laboratory of "Special Pathogens." This rock-turning in far places eventually led to the description of another new virus family and a unique genus; the Filoviridae (Ebola and Marburg viruses) and the hantaviruses.

Beyond discovery and description of new zoonotic viruses, Dr. Johnson has worked on the epidemiology and experimental therapy of several of these agents. Work of his team on clinical virology and antiviral therapy of Lassa Fever in Sierra Leone is classic. Retired from active research, he is adjunct professor of biology at the University of New Mexico, where he assists in developing an integrated research program comprising both laboratory and field studies of pathogenic Hantaviruses of the Americas.