Melisa Shah 10/28/05

WANTED: O'NYONG-NYONG VIRUS

O'NYON

Onion Head Monster Attacks the City!

www.onionheadmonster.com

PROFILE: O'nyong-nyong virus is classified into the Alphavirus genus in the Togaviridae family. It is a small positive-sense, single stranded, nonsegmented RNA virus that replicates only in the cytoplasm of cells. Its spherical virions are 60 nm in diameter. Its morphology is icosahedral and like an onion, this virus is enveloped. The curious name comes from the Nilotic language of Uganda and Sudan and means "weakening of the joints."

POWER: Aside from its intimidating name, this virus has a great power because it can fly – that is, it can be transmitted via anopheles mosquitoes. Between 1959 and1962, this virus caused a widespread outbreak in Uganda infecting 2 million people!

OFFENSES:

ATTACKS: This virus initially causes a low-grade fever in its victims. The symptoms then progress to arthralgia or arthritis typically in the knee, ankle and small joints of the extremities, followed by a maculopapular rash in 60-70% of cases.

OUTCOME: Victims recover within 1-2 weeks of clinical onset. There have been no deaths associated with this disease, and only a few suffer from prolonged joint pain.

SPEED: The incubation period of the disease is greater than eight days. During the outbreak of 1959 in Uganda, it is estimated that the virus moved at an average of 3km per day in the population.

DEFENSES:

VACCINES: No vaccine exists!

BEHAVIORAL: Since the virus is transmitted via mosquitoes, preventing the build-up of standing water and decreasing human encroachment to swamps and lakes would decrease disease prevalence. If necessary, mosquitoes could be killed with chemical spray or repelled via bug-repellent.

TREATMENT: No antivirals effective against this disease exist, hence treatment consists of reducing the symptoms of rashes, joint pains, and fever.

ACTION: If you get the O'nyong-nyong virus card, all other players must take a bite of a raw onion!

ONE LINER: Stay away from the O'nyon Head Monster!