香 港 大 學
THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

Professor Leo POON Lit-man
School of Public Health, LKS Faculty of Medicine
The University of Hong Kong

Biography
Professor Leo Poon Lit-man received his doctoral training in Sir William Dunn School of Pathology in University of Oxford (1996-1999). He joined The University of Hong Kong in 2001. Professor Poon has strong research interests related to emerging viruses, ranging from studying basic biology of RNA viruses to developing molecular diagnostic tools for infectious diseases. His work primarily focuses on influenza virus and coronavirus. He has over 170 peer-reviewed publications, and he is an ISI top 1 % most cited scientist (Total number of citations: 14721; H-index: 58). He has been named by Thomson Reuters in the list of "The World's Most Influential Scientific Minds" in 2015 and 2016.

Professor Poon involves in influenza research for over 20 years. He studied the replication and pathogenesis of this virus. He developed several molecular tests for emerging influenza viruses (e.g. H5N1, pandemic H1N1/2009 and H7N9). In 2009, he played an active role in the H1N1 pandemic and identified the first reassortant of pandemic H1N1/2009 virus in pigs. Currently, he focuses on researching the replication, transmission and vaccinology of influenza virus.

In 2003, Professor Poon involved in the discovery of a novel coronavirus as the aetiological cause of SARS. He is one of the firsts who decoded the first SARS coronavirus sequence. These findings allowed him to develop several useful molecular tests for the diagnosis of SARS. The identification of SARS coronavirus in humans and animals also prompted him to hunt for novel viruses in wildlife. In recent years, he is heavily involved in studies related to MERS, a newly emerging human diseases caused by another novel coronavirus.

Professor Poon serves as a virology expert in several international organisations. He is a committee member in the Coronavirus Study Group under the International Committee on Taxonomy of Viruses (2006-now) and he is also an expert in the Influenza Molecular Diagnosis Working Group, World Health Organization (2009-now). He previously served as an ad hoc consultant in the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (2013-2015) and in the World Organization for Animal Health (2014) for MERS.

Award and Scholarship
2016   Croucher Senior Research Fellowship, The Croucher Foundation
1996   Croucher Scholarship, The Croucher Foundation