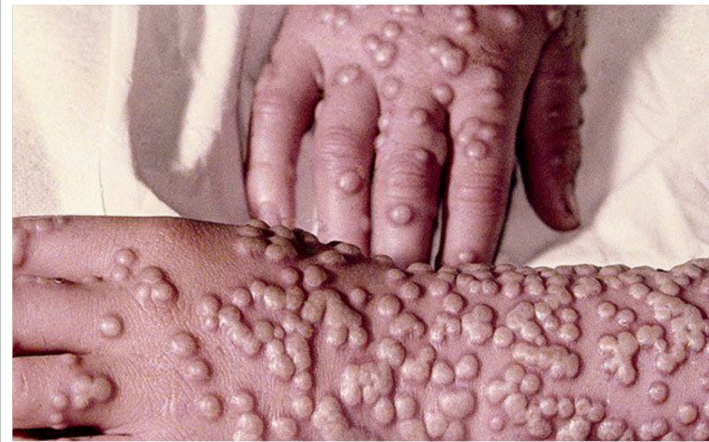


SMALLPOX

I was complaining that I had no shoes till I met a man who had no feet. – Confucius

Basics

- Infectious disease caused by the *Variola* virus
- There are several stages as the disease progresses.
- *Incubation period*: 7-19 days (average 10-14 days). This stage is not contagious.
- *Initial symptoms*: 2-4 days of high fever, headache, body aches. This stage can be contagious.
- *Early rash*: Rash/sores on the tongue / in the mouth. Once these sores start breaking down, a rash appears on the face spreading to arms and legs, then hands and feet. This is the most contagious phase!
- The sores become pustules (raised, round and firm) then form a crust and scab.
- Once all scabs have fallen off, the person is no longer contagious. That is, patient is considered infectious from the time the first oral lesions appear until the last scab falls off.



Prevention strategies

- Transmission is via inhalation of infected airborne saliva droplets, or through direct contact with infected bodily fluids or contaminated objects such as bedding or clothing. Avoid prolonged face-to-face contact with an infectious patient. All smallpox patients should be isolated until all scabs have fallen off (3-4 wks after rash onset) to prevent transmission.
- Aerosolized transmission of the virus from infected fabric and bedding can occur. Never shake linens as this may contaminate air or surfaces with infectious particles. Use hot water (160°F / 71°C) with detergent, bleach & hot air drying.
- Disinfect non-porous surfaces using EPA-registered disinfectants. Maintain good nutrition and hydration. Any suspected index case of smallpox should be immediately reported to the CDC Emergency Preparedness and Response Branch: 770-488-7100 or 404-639-3532.