

CDRS

Communicable Disease Reporting System

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE FACT SHEET

SMALL POX

Smallpox is a serious, contagious, and sometimes fatal infectious disease. In 1980, the World Health Assembly confirmed Smallpox was eradicated.

Symptoms

- Illness comes on suddenly with fever, fatigue, an overall feeling of discomfort, headache and backache, and occasionally abdominal pain.
- After 2-4 days, the temperature falls and a rash appears and goes through stages for about 4 weeks.
- The lesions start to form on the face, followed by the arms and legs, then the trunk.
- The rash starts as flat red spots that fill with fluid, then fill with puss over the next several days. In the second week, the rash forms a crust, then forms scabs that fall off after 3-4 weeks. These are the stages of the rash.

Transmission

- The Smallpox virus is passed from human-to-human through close contact with respiratory droplets and skin lesions of infected persons.
- Respiratory droplets are released when a person coughs or sneezes and can be propelled up to 3 feet.
- Materials and objects contaminated by infectious droplets can also pass the disease.

Treatment

- There is no specific drug treatment for smallpox, but research is ongoing to evaluate new treatments.

Prevention

- For persons exposed to smallpox, vaccine given within 4 days of exposure can lessen the severity of illness or possibly prevent illness altogether.

All information is general in nature and is not intended to be used as a substitute for appropriate professional advice.

Franklin County



Board of Health

Report Disease With Ease - 24 hours a day

www.cdinfo.com

Columbus and Franklin County Communicable Disease Reporting System

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