

**REGION I EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES
STANDING MEDICAL ORDERS
BLS**

SMO: Smallpox

Revised Date:

Overview: Smallpox is a serious, highly contagious and sometimes fatal infectious disease. There is no specific treatment for smallpox disease. There are two clinical forms of the disease, Variola major and Variola minor. Variola major is the severe form of smallpox and has a historical case-fatality rate of about 30 percent. Uncommon variations of Variola major, such as flat and hemorrhagic smallpox, are almost always fatal. Hemorrhagic smallpox has a much shorter incubation period and is likely not to be initially recognized as smallpox when presenting to medical care.

Chart of Incubation Period and Signs/Symptoms

Incubation Period Range: 7 to 17 days Not Contagious	Exposure to the virus is followed by incubation period. Patients do not have any symptoms and may feel fine. This period averages about 12 to 14 days but can range from 7 to 17 days. During this time, patients are not contagious.
Initial Symptoms Last 2 to 4 days Sometimes Contagious	The first symptoms include fever, malaise, head and body aches, sometimes vomiting. Fever is usually high (101 degrees F to 104 degrees F). Patients are too sick to carry on normal activities.
Early Rash Days 1 to 5 Contagious	Small, flat blemishes or discolorations that are level with the skin surface appear on the tongue and mouth. Sores develop; break open, spreading virus into the oral cavity. Rash appears on the face and spreads to the arms, legs, hands and feet. The rash spreads to all parts of the body within 24 hours. As the rash appears, fever falls and the patient may feel better. Day three rash becomes a small superficial elevation of the skin. By day four, these small superficial elevations on the skin become small blisters filled with thick, opaque fluid with a depression in the center that looks like a belly button. This is a major distinguishing characteristic of smallpox. At this time fever rises until scabs form.
Pustular Rash <u>Days 5 to 10</u> Very Contagious	The blisters become pustules, sharply raised, usually round and firm to the touch. They feel like there is a small round object under the skin; it has been described as if there is a BB pellet embedded under the skin.
Pustules/Scabs Days 11 to 14 Contagious	The pustules form a crust and then scab. Two weeks after the rash appeared, many of the lesions have scabbed over.
Resolving Scabs Days 15 to 21 Contagious	The scabs begin to fall off; leaving marks on the skin that eventually become pitted scars. Three weeks after the rash appeared most scabs have fallen off. The patient is contagious until all of the scabs have fallen off.
Scabs Resolved Day 21 and beyond Not Contagious	Scabs fall off. Patient is no longer contagious.
Isolation	Airborne and contact

INFORMATION NEEDED

- Determine at what stage the patient is at for this disease
- Other members of the patient's family or friends displaying similar signs and symptoms

EMT-BASIC

- Standard isolation techniques to be used by EMS personnel (gloves, masks, gowns)
- Assess the patient for any other medical or trauma issues
- Keep the patient wrapped in a sheet and do not “ruffle” the sheet
- Supportive care with supplemental oxygenation if needed with a nasal cannula at 2-6 LPM or a non-rebreather mask at 10-15 LPM

Documentation of adherence to protocol:

- History related to the incident
- Notation of any skin lesions
- Measures taken to protect the patient and EMS personnel during care
- Oxygen provided

Medical Control Contact Criteria

- Contact Medical Control if there is any reason to suspect that the patient is suffering from smallpox

Precautions and Comments

- Remember that this disease can be very contagious and all precautions are to be taken’ by the EMS personnel to perform as much isolation as possible.

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