

IDRS Infectious Disease Reporting System

Disease Reporting 24 Hours a Day

Columbus Public Health and Franklin County Public Health

MARBURG HEMORRHAGIC FEVER

Marburg hemorrhagic fever is a rare, severe type of hemorrhagic fever which affects both humans and non-human primates. Marburg is in the same virus family as Ebola viruses. Marburg virus was first recognized in 1967, when outbreaks of hemorrhagic fever occurred simultaneously in laboratories in Marburg and Frankfurt, Germany and in Belgrade, Yugoslavia (now Serbia). A total of 31 people became ill, including laboratory workers, medical personnel and family members who had cared for them. The first people infected had been exposed to African green monkeys or their tissues, which had been imported for research.

Symptoms

Symptoms appear 5-10 days after exposure and include:

- Fever, chills, headache, and muscle aches that begin suddenly
- Red rash on the trunk of the body
- Nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain and diarrhea
- Chest pain
- Sore throat
- Worsening symptoms include jaundice (yellow skin and eyes), severe weight loss, confusion, shock, abnormal bleeding and multiple organ failure, often leading to death.



Transmission

- Marburg virus is native to central Africa.
- Fruit bats are most likely the main carriers, although other mammals can be infected, including monkeys. Fruit bats infected with Marburg virus do not show obvious signs of illness. People have been infected from handling infected monkeys or their body fluids.
- Spread of the virus between humans has occurred in a setting of close contact, often in a hospital. Droplets of body fluids might help spread the virus through the air over short distances (about 3 feet).



Treatment

- There is no cure for Marburg. Treatment focuses on caring for the ill person in a secure environment. Persons with Marburg hemorrhagic fever need fluids, oxygen, and support to help their bodies fight the virus.

Prevention

- There is no vaccine for the Marburg virus.
- Avoiding close physical contact with infected people and their body fluids is the most important way of controlling the spread of disease.
- People sick with Marburg hemorrhagic fever should be cared for in a secure facility where health care providers wear protective clothing. These facilities must disinfect or dispose of equipment used in treating or caring for patients, such as needles and thermometers.



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



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