Smallpox

Merlin disease code=05090
Case report form (CRF): None
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Clinical criteria for case classification
Confirmatory:
Both of the following:
• Acute onset of fever ≥101°F (≥38.3°C)
• Followed by a rash characterized by firm, deep seated vesicles or pustules in the same stage of development without other apparent cause.

Presumptive:
Presentations of smallpox that do not meet the classical confirmatory clinical criteria:
• Hemorrhagic type,
• Or flat type,
• Or Variola sine eruptione.

Detailed clinical description is available on the CDC web site: www.cdc.gov/smallpox/clinicians/clinical-disease.html.

Supportive:
Generalized, acute vesicular or pustular rash illness with fever preceding development of rash by 1-4 days.

Laboratory criteria for case classification
Either of the following:
• Polymerase chain reaction (PCR) identification of variola DNA in a clinical specimen
• Or isolation of smallpox (variola) virus from a clinical specimen (Level D laboratory only; confirmed by variola PCR).

Epidemiological criteria for case classification
Confirmatory:
A person who is epidemiologically linked to a confirmed smallpox case with laboratory evidence.

Presumptive:
A person who is epidemiologically linked to a confirmed smallpox case.

Case classification
Confirmed:
Either of the following:
• A person with laboratory evidence
• Or a person with confirmatory clinical criteria and confirmatory epidemiological criteria.

Probable:
A person with confirmatory or presumptive clinical criteria and presumptive epidemiological criteria.

Suspect:
A person with supportive clinical criteria.
**Criteria to distinguish a new case from previous reports**
Not applicable.

**Comments**
A case may be excluded as a suspect or probable smallpox case if an alternative diagnosis fully explains the illness or appropriate clinical specimens are negative for laboratory criteria for smallpox.

✉ Specimens from all cases must be sent to the Bureau of Public Health Laboratories for confirmation.

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