



Virginia Department of Health
DIVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL EPIDEMIOLOGY

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B-virus or *Cercopithecine Herpesvirus 1*

What is B-virus?

B-virus is a disease caused by a virus called *Cercopithecine herpesvirus 1*. It is a disease of non-human primates of the genus *Macaca* (macaque monkeys) that can also affect people.

Who becomes ill with B-virus?

People who handle infected macaques may be exposed to and become ill from B-virus.

Where is the B-virus found?

The virus can be found in the secretions and tissues of infected primates. Infected primates may appear healthy.

How is B-virus spread?

Transmission of the virus usually occurs when an infected macaque bites or scratches a person or infectious secretions enter a mucus membrane. Laboratory workers have also been exposed to the virus by handling infected tissues.

What are the symptoms?

Symptomatic human infections with the B-virus are rare. The most common symptoms are headache, fever, chills, muscle pain, and pain, tingling or a rash at the site of the wound.

How soon after exposure do symptoms appear?

The incubation period for infection in humans can range from 2 days to 5 weeks.

Can the animal be tested?

Testing the primate is usually not recommended because the animal may shed the virus intermittently. All macaques should be handled as if they were shedding the virus.

Do exposed people need to be excluded from work or school?

No.

What is the treatment for the B-virus?

Antiviral medications are administered to anyone that may have been exposed to the B-virus.

How can transmission of the B-virus be prevented?

Macaques that seem healthy can be infected with and shed the virus. Humans interacting with macaques should wear personal protective equipment and handle the animal appropriately to avoid bites or scratches. Humans should be discouraged from owning macaques as pets.
