

Vaccinia, Disease or Adverse Event

Agent: Vaccinia virus, which is used in smallpox vaccine.

Mode of Transmission: Transmitted through injection with the smallpox vaccine or through direct contact with the vaccination site or contaminated materials.

Signs/Symptoms: Include rash, fever and head and body aches. Some individuals, especially those with certain skin conditions or weakened immune systems, may experience more serious effects such as a toxic or allergic reaction at the site of the vaccination or spread of the virus to other parts of the body.

Prevention: When smallpox is not circulating, in order to prevent serious reactions to the vaccine, only laboratory workers who handle smallpox and certain healthcare workers are recommended to receive the smallpox vaccine.

Other Important Information: The U.S. government has enough smallpox vaccine to vaccinate every person in the United States in the event of a smallpox emergency.

Vaccinia became a reportable condition in Virginia in 2003. Following this, the first report of vaccinia infection in Virginia was received in 2008. The infection occurred in a laboratory worker who handled vaccinia-infected mice.