



Distinguishing Smallpox from Chickenpox

	Smallpox 	Chickenpox 
How long is the incubation period?	Ranging from 7-17 days (usually 10-14 days)	Ranging from 10-21 days (usually 14-16 days)
When is it communicable?	Communicability begins with the onset of lesions (usually in the mouth by saliva droplets) and ends with the disappearance of all scabs.	Communicability begins up to 5 days before (usually 1-2 days before) onset of the rash and ends when all lesions have crusted.
What are the early/prodromic symptoms?	Adults may experience chills, high fever, severe headaches, backache, abdominal pain, and prostration for 3-4 days. Children may suffer from vomiting and seizures.	Adults may experience mild symptoms of fever and malaise for 1-2 days. In children, rash is often the first sign of disease.
How do lesions progress?	<p>Slow progress: macules→ papules→ vesicles→ pustules→ scabs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Appear more or less simultaneously and are in the same stage of development in different areas of the body – Distributed more on the extremities and face than on the trunk – Deeply embedded in the skin – Frequently found on palms and soles – Scabs (crusts) form 8-14 days after rash onset, and separate 21-28 days after rash onset 	<p>Rapid progress: macules→ papules→ vesicles→ scabs <i>*Note the absence of pustules</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Appear in successive crops and in any one area on the body, may be in different stages of development – Distributed more on the trunk than extremities, face, and scalp – Not deeply embedded in the skin – Not frequently found on palms and soles – Scabs (crusts) form 4-7 days after rash onset and separate < 14 days after rash onset
What are the reporting guidelines?	<p><u>Suspected cases:</u> Report immediately</p>	<p><u>Outbreaks:</u> Report immediately</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Routine settings: ≥5 cases within 21-day period – Sensitive settings (health facilities, prisons, or long term care facilities): ≥2 cases within 21-day period <p><u>Fatal cases:</u> Report immediately</p> <p><u>Hospitalized cases:</u> Report within 7 calendar days of identification</p>
<p>Report suspect and confirmed cases to the Communicable Disease Reporting System at (888) 397-3993</p>		

Additional Information

Los Angeles County Department of Public Health

Communicable Disease Manual: www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/acd/procs/b73/B73Index.htm

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Clinical Guidelines: www.bt.cdc.gov/agent/smallpox/clinicians.asp & www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd-vac/varicella/default.htm#clinical

Smallpox Evaluation Guidelines: www.bt.cdc.gov/agent/smallpox/diagnosis/evalposter.asp

Vaccination Recommendations: www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/ACIP-list.htm