



# Smallpox Vaccination Program

## Information Sheet for Recreational or Housing Facility Staff

The US military has initiated smallpox vaccination for selected personnel.

The virus used in the vaccine cannot cause smallpox.

The virus is easily killed using hot water with either detergent or bleach.

### ABOUT THE SMALLPOX VACCINATION PROGRAM

The US military has initiated smallpox vaccination for selected personnel. The smallpox vaccine contains vaccinia virus. This virus cannot cause smallpox. Vaccinia virus stays near the skin's surface for about 3 weeks. A blister forms initially, then a scab and finally the scab falls off. Other people who touch the blister or scab can get infected with vaccinia if they have open sores or breaks in the skin.

### HOW OFTEN CAN VACCINIA VIRUS SPREAD FROM A VACCINATION SITE TO SOMEONE ELSE?

In the past, vaccinia virus spread to somebody else between 8 and 27 times out of every million smallpox vaccinations. Most often, the virus spread from one child to another.

If everyone who is vaccinated follows the three main steps (bandages, sleeves, hand washing), the possibility of spread to another person is very low.

### HOW SHOULD THE VACCINATED PERSON CARE FOR THEIR SITE?

- ✓ The vaccination site should not be touched. Hands should be washed often. Other people should not touch the site or materials that touched it.
- ✓ The vaccinated person's clothes, towels, or toiletries should not be shared with others.
- ✓ Shirtsleeves and a bandage should be worn to cover the site. Dispose of bandages in sealed plastic bags.
- ✓ Normal bathing or showering is encouraged, keeping the site covered. In the gym, a waterproof bandage is recommended if the person drips sweat.

- ✓ Avoid spas, hot tubs and swimming pools while the site is healing.
- ✓ The site should not contact any surface or equipment in the gym. If this happens, notify the gym staff so the surface can be disinfected.

### AFTER BATHING OR SHOWERING, IS IT NECESSARY TO SANITIZE THE TUB BEFORE OTHERS USE IT?

It is not necessary to sanitize a tub or sink after each use. Routine sanitizing between occupants is sufficient. Clean any surface that touches a dirty bandage, using common disinfectants.

### WHAT ABOUT LAUNDRY?

Do not share clothes, towels, or toiletries with somebody who just got a smallpox vaccination.

The vaccinated individual should put their sheets and towels in a plastic bag, to be laundered. Laundry workers should use plastic gloves when transferring laundry to the washing machine. Towels and linens that touch the site must be washed in hot water with soap or bleach.

### FOR DISINFECTING SURFACES OR EQUIPMENT

The virus is fragile and is easily killed by alcohol-based cleansers or by soap and water. For cleaning surfaces that come in contact with the vaccination site, use standard disinfection solutions. For laundry, use hot water with soap or bleach.

Fact sheet available:

[www.chppmeur.healthcare.hqusareur.army.mil](http://www.chppmeur.healthcare.hqusareur.army.mil)

References and more Information:

1. Go to [www.smallpox.army.mil](http://www.smallpox.army.mil)

[www.smallpox.army.mil](http://www.smallpox.army.mil)

2. Go to [www.bt.cdc.gov](http://www.bt.cdc.gov) [www.bt.cdc.gov](http://www.bt.cdc.gov)