

Lymphocytic Choriomeningitis Virus

LCMV

LCMV is a risk group 3 virus affecting humans and animals. It is considered a **reproductive pathogen** as it can be transmitted from an infected mother to the fetus during pregnancy. Depending on the developmental stage of the fetus at the time of infection, long-term neurologic abnormalities or abortion may occur.

How can I be exposed to LCMV?

- Transmission occurs via aerosol and direct contact with mucus membranes.
- Vertical transmission may occur during pregnancy.
- Organ transplants from infected donors.
- Laboratory workers may be exposed by infected animals, tissues, blood, feces, urine and other body fluids.

How can I protect myself from exposure?

- Avoid direct skin contact by wearing full protective clothing.
- Avoid mucous membrane exposure by using eye/face protection.
- Avoid respiratory exposure by using a biosafety cabinet or other primary containment device and wearing a respirator.
- The use of needles, syringes, and other sharp objects should be strictly limited, and additional precautions should be taken when working with animals.

What should I do if I think I've been exposed to LCMV?

Wash the affected area immediately for 15 minutes with soap and water and seek medical attention.

What symptoms should I look for after a potential exposure?

Immunocompetent adults may be asymptomatic or limited to non-specific viral symptoms, such as fever, cough, malaise, myalgia, and headache. Other symptoms include photophobia, nausea,

vomiting, and sore throat. If progresses to meningitis, neurologic symptoms may develop.

How long does it take for symptoms to develop?

The incubation period for LCMV is 8 to 13 days and 15-21 days before meningeal symptoms appear.

Is there a treatment or vaccine?

Treatment is generally supportive care. Ribavirin may be an effective treatment. There is no vaccine.

Can I transmit it to other people?

Only vertical transmission from mother to fetus and organ transplant from an infected donor have been documented.

Can I transmit it to my pets?

Yes, rodents are particularly susceptible and may be infected if humans handle them after exposure to wild rodent droppings, urine, or saliva without washing their hands.

Can it survive on surfaces?

LCMV is quickly inactivated outside of the host or optimal laboratory conditions.

See Pathogen Safety Data Sheet for More Information

