

Macaque Tissue Warning

Macaque tissues can potentially contain Cercopithecine herpes virus known as “B virus”. If this virus is present in the tissue and it comes into contact with a break in the skin or a splash to mucous membranes you may be exposed to the virus and can become infected. If untreated this virus is considered lethal. It can be present in mucosal or neurological macaque tissue. (Tissue from a non-macaque monkey species is not an exposure).

Methods to follow when working with Macaque tissue

Wear proper personal protective equipment (PPE) at all times

Proper Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Nitrile gloves and a disposable gown should be worn at all times. The disposable gown should be fluid resistant, have a solid front, and long sleeves. Glove cuffs should extend over gown sleeves.
- Shoe covers may be worn, as appropriate.
- Eye and face protection (e.g. a face shield or safety glasses) should be worn whenever there is a possibility of splashing.
- A disposable hair cover should also be worn when handling animal tissue, as appropriate.

If you experience a skin compromising wound, or a splash of material to mucous membranes, while working with macaque tissues you may have had a “Macaque Exposure”. **You must immediately wash the wound with soap and water using a massaging motion for 15 minutes for any skin wounds like needle sticks or punctures. If you have a splash to mucous membranes you must irrigate eyes or other mucous membranes with plain water or normal saline for 15 minutes.**

If you work outside of OHSU please contact an Infectious Disease physician familiar with Herpes B virus exposures.

What to do if you have an exposure?

Immediately clean the exposed area as described above. This is your greatest defense against B virus infection. Remember that B virus can be fatal to humans. If you have a skin compromising wound, or if a potentially contaminated fluid or item has come in direct contact with your eye or other mucous membrane we strongly recommend that you see the Occupational health nurse, ideally within 3 hours of the exposure.

Based on the level of risk associated with the type of injury you receive the treating physician may prescribe antiviral medication for you. These medications help to protect you from becoming infected. If you work outside OHSU please contact an Infectious Disease specialist.