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| **The Cause of Smallpox**  VariolaA magnified image of Variola major, the smallpox virus.  Variola (the virus that causes smallpox) is a member of the orthopoxvirus genus, which also includes [viruses](http://www.emedicinehealth.com/slideshow_pictures_viral_infections/article_em.htm) that cause cowpox, monkeypox, orf, and [molluscum contagiosum](http://www.emedicinehealth.com/molluscum_contagiosum/article_em.htm). The variola virus is the only known cause of smallpox. The disease affects only humans. No animal reservoirs or insect vectors (insects that spread a disease) exist, and no carrier state (period when the virus is in the body, but the person is not actively sick) occurs. Before smallpox was wiped out, the disease survived through continual person-to-person transmission.The virus is only transmitted from human to human; there are no known animal infections.  Variola major, or smallpox, has a death rate of 30%. Variola minor, or alastrim, is a milder form of the virus with a death rate of 1%. Four types of variola exist: classic, [hemorrhagic](http://www.emedicinehealth.com/blood_and_bleeding_disorders_quiz_iq/quiz.htm), [malignant](http://www.emedicinehealth.com/slideshow_pictures_cancer_101/article_em.htm), and modified. | **Bibliography**  Fact Sources  <http://www.emedicinehealth.com/smallpox>  [http://www.bt.cdc.gov/agent/smallpox](http://www.bt.cdc.gov/agent/smallpox/overview/disease-facts.asp)  [http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/smallpox](http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/smallpox/basics/symptoms/con-20022769)  Image Sources  <https://www.nlm.nih.gov/nativevoices/assets/timeline/000/000/236/236_w_full.jpg>  http://o.canada.com/health-2/countries-prepare-to-debate-destroying-last-smallpox-stocks | **Smallpox**  **An Epidemic**    By: Carson Stark |

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| Effect on the New World  The Native Americans were hit especially hard by Smallpox when the Europeans came over because they didn’t have the resistance to plagues the Europeans had. The epidemic killed swaths of the Native American population well before the Europeans could. The greater atrocity wasn’t caused by the Europeans, but the diseases they brought with them. | Symptoms of Smallpox  Early Stages   * Fever * Overall discomfort * Headache * Severe fatigue * Severe back pain * Vomiting, possibly   A few days later,   * Flat, red spots appear first on your face, hands and forearms, and later on your trunk. | Deaths Per Year  Smallpox outbreaks have occurred from time to time for thousands of years, but the disease is now eradicated after a successful worldwide vaccination program. The last case of smallpox in the United States was in 1949. The last naturally occurring case in the world was in Somalia in 1977. |