



## Marburg virus disease: information sheet for category 3 contacts

You have been given this information sheet because you have had contact with someone with Marburg virus disease, or material contaminated with Marburg virus. You should follow the advice in this information sheet and check yourself for symptoms for 21 days after you had possible contact with Marburg virus. If you develop symptoms of Marburg virus disease within 21 days of your last exposure to Marburg virus, you should stay at home and call your designated contact immediately.

### About Marburg virus disease

Marburg virus disease is a rare but serious disease caused by Marburg virus. Outbreaks and sporadic cases have previously been reported in Angola, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Kenya, Ghana, Guinea, Uganda, South Africa, Rwanda and Tanzania.

### How Marburg virus spreads

Marburg virus can spread by:

- direct contact with the organs, blood, secretions, or other bodily fluids of an infected person (including sexual transmission)
- contact with objects, such as needles or soiled clothing, that have been contaminated with infected secretions
- contact with an infected animal, such as chimpanzees, gorillas or fruit bats, either if they are found ill or dead, or collected as bushmeat

Marburg virus is not spread through routine, social contact (such as shaking hands or sitting next to someone) with people who do not have symptoms. There is no evidence that Marburg virus can spread through the air.

It takes up to 21 days from when someone is exposed to the virus for symptoms to appear.

## Symptoms of Marburg virus disease

The onset of illness is sudden, with:

- high fever
- severe headache
- intense weakness

By about the third day, symptoms include:

- severe watery diarrhoea
- abdominal pain
- abdominal cramping
- nausea
- vomiting

Some patients with severe illness may develop internal and external bleeding.

Marburg virus disease is fatal in between 24% to 88% of all cases, depending on the virus strain, the person's age, and other factors including whether the person has a weakened immune system. Starting supportive treatment promptly after symptoms begin can improve the likelihood of surviving the disease.

## Preventing and treating Marburg virus disease

There is currently no licensed vaccine for Marburg virus. To avoid Marburg virus spreading between people, those caring for individuals with possible or suspected Marburg virus disease should avoid contact with the patient's bodily fluids and should wear personal protective equipment (PPE).

Treatment for Marburg virus disease is with supportive care, including balancing fluids and electrolytes, maintaining a person's oxygen status and blood pressure, and treating any co-infections. Supportive care improves survival, particularly if started early.

## Your risk of developing Marburg virus disease

You reported that you were in the same room as, and within 2 metres of, someone who had Marburg virus disease, but you did not have direct contact with them, their body fluids or objects that they may have contaminated.

We would like to monitor you for a period of 21 days from when you were last exposed to Marburg virus. This will mean that we can act quickly in the unlikely event that you develop symptoms, reducing the risks to you and to others close to you.

## What you need to do

Your family and household contacts are not at risk of catching Marburg virus from you if you do not have any symptoms.

You should take the following actions for 21 days after you had possible contact with Marburg virus:

- record your temperature and monitor yourself for other symptoms suggestive of Marburg virus disease (as listed above) **twice per day at the same times each day**
- report to your designated contact (see below for their details) if you develop a temperature of **37.5°C or higher**, or other symptoms suggestive of Marburg virus disease, so that they can arrange for you to be assessed. They will explain the local arrangements for accessing healthcare
- there are no restrictions on work, travel or social activities as long as you have no symptoms
- do not share towels, bed linen, toothbrushes or razors
- use barrier contraception or avoid unprotected sexual contact with other people
- postpone any non-essential medical or dental treatment including vaccination. If you need essential medical or dental treatment, inform your healthcare provider about your possible contact with Marburg virus

If you are a healthcare worker, you should tell your line manager that you have been identified as a contact of Marburg virus, but that you are still able to attend work as long as you remain asymptomatic.

## Use of medicines such as aspirin, paracetamol or ibuprofen

Certain medicines, such as paracetamol, ibuprofen and aspirin, can reduce your body temperature during a fever (antipyretic) for up to 8 hours. Thermometer measurements may therefore show a lower temperature than would be expected for up to 8 hours after taking an antipyretic.

You must call your designated contact for further advice if you need to take an antipyretic medicine.

Please take your temperature before you take paracetamol, ibuprofen or aspirin. If your temperature is 37.5°C or higher, you must call your contact immediately.

A temperature of 37.5°C or higher is always significant, whether you are taking one of these medicines or not, and must be reported urgently.

## What to do if you become ill

It is unlikely that you have caught Marburg virus. However, if you are feeling unwell or develop any of the symptoms of Marburg virus disease (including a temperature of **37.5°C or higher**) within 21 days from when you had contact with Marburg virus, please **stay at home**. Take your temperature if you have not done this already. **Phone your designated contact immediately** (see below for details), who will arrange for you to be assessed by an appropriate clinician. In an emergency, you should call 999 and tell them about your symptoms and possible contact with Marburg virus.

<b>Your designated contact number is:</b>
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## Further information

More information about Marburg can be found on the following websites:

UK Health Security Agency: [www.gov.uk/guidance/marburg-virus-disease-origins-reservoirs-transmission-and-guidelines](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/marburg-virus-disease-origins-reservoirs-transmission-and-guidelines)

World Health Organization information on Marburg virus disease:  
[www.who.int/health-topics/marburg-virus-disease](https://www.who.int/health-topics/marburg-virus-disease)