



UK Health
Security
Agency

Nipah virus infection: information sheet for category 2 contacts

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

About Nipah virus infection

Nipah virus infection is a rare but serious infection caused by Nipah virus. The virus was first detected in 1998 and is named after the village where it was first detected. Outbreaks and sporadic cases have been previously reported from various parts of Asia including Malaysia, India and Bangladesh.

How is Nipah virus spread?

Nipah virus can spread through close and direct contact with someone who is ill with the infection, or with their body fluids (such as saliva, blood or urine). It can also be spread through the air when someone coughs or sneezes or by touching contaminated objects and surfaces (fomites).

Nipah virus does not spread very easily between people and is not spread through normal social contact like shaking hands or sitting near someone who is well.

It can take between 4 and 21 days from contact with someone who has Nipah virus for symptoms to develop.

Symptoms of Nipah virus infection

Symptoms of Nipah virus infection typically start with sudden flu-like symptoms including:

- fever (high temperature)
- vomiting
- general exhaustion
- headache
- muscle aches
- coughing
- sneezing
- runny nose
- sore throats

Some individuals may experience neurological (nervous system) symptoms including:

- sensitivity to light or sound
- neck stiffness
- seizures
- reduced conscious levels (for example drowsiness)

Preventing and treating Nipah virus infection

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

Treatment for Nipah virus infection is with supportive care, including balancing fluids and electrolytes, maintaining a person's oxygen status and blood pressure, and treating any co-infections.

Your risk of developing Nipah virus infection

You reported that (one of the following):

- you had direct or close contact with someone with Nipah virus infection, or their body fluids, outside of a designated high level isolation unit, but you were wearing appropriate PPE
- you were in an environment contaminated with the body fluids of someone who had Nipah virus infection, but you were wearing appropriate PPE

- you have had contact with Nipah virus in a laboratory which did not meet containment level 4 requirements, but followed usual laboratory practice and you were wearing appropriate PPE

We would like to monitor you for a period of 21 days from your last possible exposure to Nipah 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 for 21 days

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

- check and record your temperature **twice per day at the same time each day** (for example once in the morning and once in the evening)
- monitor yourself for other symptoms listed above
- 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 Nipah virus infection, 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 Nipah virus

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

If you are a healthcare worker, you should tell your line manager that you have been identified as a contact of Nipah virus, but that you are still able to attend work as long as you continue to not have any symptoms.

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 these medicines.

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

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 feel unwell

It is unlikely that you have caught Nipah virus. However, if you are feeling unwell or develop any of the symptoms of Nipah virus infection (including a temperature of 37.5°C or higher) within 21 days from when you had contact with Nipah virus **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 Nipah virus.

Your designated contact number is:

Where can I find more information about Nipah virus?

More information about Nipah can be found on the [UK Health Security Agency website](#) and the [World Health Organization website](#).