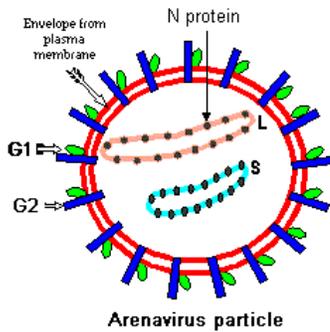
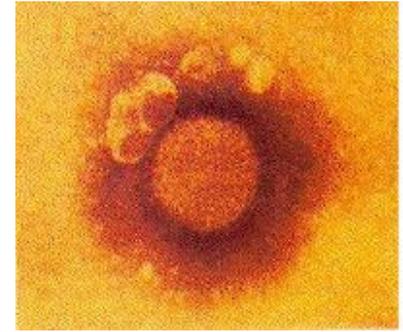


# LCMV



**NAME:** Lymphocytic Choriomeningitis Virus

**DESCRIPTION:** LCMV is part of the family arenaviridae, and is grouped with “old world” arenaviruses. It is an enveloped, single-stranded, negative sense RNA virus with a bisegmented genome and helical nucleocapsids. The nucleocapsids form rings and coded material is expressed using an ambisense transcription strategy.



**POWER:** LCMV is relatively rare, but has the potential to cause serious infections in some infected individuals. If you happen to be one of the unlucky few with a poor or weakened immune system, you might end up in a hospital with encephalitis, meningitis, and other CNS illnesses. Fetuses infected before birth are more often in trouble, and some never make it to see the real world.

## OFFENSES:

**Attacks:** LCMV is common in hamsters and mice, and is passed to humans from rodent reservoirs mainly through contact in breeding colonies, pet supply stores, research centers, and through hamsters at home by aerosol infection, contamination of food, and transmission through fomites. Recently, LCMV has been transmitted through transplants, and can be transmitted vertically from mother to child through the placenta, but the virus is typically not passed from person to person.

**Outcome:** The most common result of an LCMV infection will be headache, fever, myalgia, nausea, loss of appetite and a range of other constitutional symptoms. Sometimes influenza-like symptoms may result. More serious effects typically only occur in immunocompromised individuals: in these cases, CNS infections such as encephalitis and meningitis may occur.. Transplacental infections are often quite serious in the first or second trimester, potentially resulting in birth defects or fetal death.

**Speed:** The incubation period of the virus is about 10 to 12 days. While in most people the minor flu-like symptoms will last for a brief periods, when they occur, more serious effects of the virus such as febrile illness, encephalitis, aseptic meningitis, etc can last for several months.

## DEFENCES:

**Vaccines:** None.

**Behavioral:** The best way to avoid infection is to stay away from the creepy creatures that carry the virus! Where this is not possible, extra safety precautions should be taken in handling rodents. Pregnant women and especially immunocompromised individuals should avoid contact with rodents.

**Treatment:** Currently, the only treatment is supportive therapy for an infected individual. In most cases, the infection will be resolved without serious or long-lasting complications.

**GAME ACTION:** That job at the mouse genome center was a bad idea! Off to the hospital to recover from encephalitis for three months.

*“You may think I’m precious, you may think I’m cute, but don’t get too friendly, Ill turn your brain into juice.”*

