McMaster University
Medical Monitoring Program Information Sheet

The purpose of this document is to provide information on an agent/virus in order for all McMaster University staff and students to make an informed decision about entering our medical monitoring program.

Please review this document, print your name, sign and date the Memorandum of Understanding and Agreement and then provide it to your supervisor.

Agrobacterium

The following summary is provided by the McMaster Biosafety Office.

Please note - this information is not definitive, a panel has been called by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) USA, to review the issue of Agrobacterium contribution to human disease.

Reference http://www.i-sis.org.uk/agrobacteriumAndMorgellons.php

Agrobacterium, a soil bacterium causing crown gall disease in plants, that has been widely used in creating genetically modified (GM) plants since the 1980s because of its ability to transfer a piece of its genetic material, the T-DNA on its tumour-inducing (Ti) plasmid to the plant genome

The following summary is provided by Employee Health Services.

For a complete copy of the excerpted text below please refer to:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agrobacterium

Facts & Symptoms

Although generally seen as an infection in plants, Agrobacterium can be responsible for opportunistic infections in humans with weakened immune systems, but has not been shown to be a primary pathogen in otherwise healthy individuals. One of the earliest associations of human disease caused by Agrobacterium radiobacter was reported by Dr. J. R. Cain in Scotland (1988). A later study suggested that Agrobacterium attaches to and genetically transforms several types of human cells by integrating its T-DNA into the human cell genome. The study was conducted using cultured human tissue and did not draw any conclusions regarding related biological activity in nature.
There is a conjectured connection with Morgellons syndrome. Dr Raphael Stricker from New Morgellons Order along with Dr. Citovsky, an expert on plant pathogens State University of New York at Stony Brook, reported in January, 2007, that Morgellons skin fibers appear to contain cellulose. Five skin samples of Morgellons patients contained evidence of DNA from Agrobacterium. However, Dr. Randy Wymore from Oklahoma State University repeated This Agrobacterium Study in 2010 and did not find DNA evidence from agrobacterium on any Morgellons patients. Dr. Randy Wymore stated this at a 2010 "New Morgellons Order" Conference in Austin, TX.

CDC launch investigation on Morgellons’ Disease

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) in the United States announced the launch of an investigation on ‘Morgellons Disease’ in January 2008 [1], after receiving thousands of complaints from people with this bewildering condition, which it describes as follows [2]: “Persons who suffer from this unexplained skin condition report a range of cutaneous (skin) symptoms including crawling, biting and stinging sensations; granules, threads, fibers, or black speck-like materials on or beneath the skin, and/or skin lesions (e.g., rashes or sores). In addition to skin manifestations, some sufferers also report fatigue, mental confusion, short term memory loss, joint pain, and changes in visions.”

Memorandum of Understanding and Agreement (“MUA”) for Medical Monitoring Program

Note: This MUA is to be signed by the employee/student and supervisor, filed and kept by the supervisor. It will be reviewed during the annual biosafety audit by the McMaster Biosafety office.

The employee/student named below acknowledges and agrees as follows:

- I have read and understand all of the information in this Medical Monitoring Information Sheet provided jointly by the McMaster Biosafety Office and Employee Health Services and reviewed the biologically hazardous agent to which I have potential exposure.  
  Initial here____

- I will report a pregnancy or a compromised immune system (due to medication {steroid or other immunosuppressive therapy}, organ transplant, chemotherapy or radiation therapy, HIV infection etc.) to my supervisor and X (graduate students) or Employee Health Services Occupational Health Nurse at ext. 20310 (faculty and staff) Initial here____

- I will report an exposure to a biological agent to my supervisor immediately and complete a McMaster incident/accident report. Initial here____
• I will report any illness that resembles the symptoms listed in this Medical Monitoring Information Sheet to my supervisor.  **Initial here**

• I recognize my responsibility to observe all safety practices and precautions while present in the laboratory.  **Initial here**

• I am aware of, and wish to participate in, the medical monitoring program (RMM #605) for this biological agent. Please circle: [yes]  [no]  **Initial here**

Employee/Student print name:  
______________________________________________

Signature:  ________________________________

Date:  ________________________________  

Supervisor print name:  
______________________________________________

Signature:  ________________________________

Date:  ________________________________