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Monkeypox Virus: Patient Information After Diagnosis

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You are receiving this handout because you've been diagnosed with monkeypox.

What is monkeypox?

Monkeypox is a viral illness. It is usually found only in African countries but over the past several months has been spreading in other countries, including the United States. Symptoms commonly include fever, chills, muscle aches, exhaustion, headache, lymph node swelling, and rash. Usually monkeypox improves over time without needing special treatments, but there is medication available for people with severe symptoms and a vaccine to protect people who were exposed to someone with monkeypox.

What should I do to prevent spread to others?

Monkeypox can spread through contact with the rash, skin bumps/spots/blisters and body fluids (including saliva and respiratory droplets) of infected people and also through contact with clothing/sheets/towels etc that an infected person used. Because of this, people with monkeypox should self-isolate until bumps/rash have fully resolved, the scabs have fallen off, and a fresh layer of skin has formed. This whole process can take 2-4 weeks.

- Isolate at home and do not travel. Stay in a separate room and use a separate bathroom from others. If there is not a separate bathroom, wear a mask in the bathroom and disinfect surfaces such as counters, toilet seats, and faucets after showering, using the toilet, or changing bandages that cover the rash. Wear disposable gloves while cleaning if you have a rash on your hands. If other household members need to be within 6 feet of you, both you and they should wear masks (N95 if available, otherwise surgical mask).
- Do not let anyone else touch your rash/bumps/spots or body fluids. Do not engage in sexual activity until your rash completely heals.
- Monkeypox infection is more serious for pregnant women, children younger than 8 years old and immunocompromised people.
- Do not share bed sheets, clothing, towels, wash cloths, makeup, drinking glasses or eating utensils with anyone. Do your own laundry wearing gloves and a mask if possible.
- If you need medical care, notify the clinic or hospital that you might have monkeypox. Before leaving your home, cover all skin rashes by wearing long sleeves or long pants or bandages. Consider wearing gloves if rash is on your hands.

Disinfection and cleaning

- Monkeypox virus can live on surfaces for at least 15 days and maybe longer
- Put coversheets, waterproof mattress covers, blankets, or tarps over things that you are using that can't be disinfected easily like upholstered furniture and car interiors.
- Immediately put gloves, dressings, and bandages that had contact with your rash/skin spots/bumps/blisters into a plastic bag that can be tied off.

- In general “wet clean” rather than “dry clean” (avoid vacuuming, dry dusting)
- Disinfect areas where individuals with monkeypox spent significant time before diagnosis using these tips: <https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/specific-settings/home-disinfection.html>)

Considerations for animals

- People with monkeypox should isolate away from animals, including pets, farm animals and wild animals. Keep any bandages, textiles (such as clothes, bedding) and other items away from animals.
- If you notice that an animal that had contact with an infected person appears sick (such as lethargy, lack of appetite, coughing, bloating, nasal or eye secretions or crust, fever, rash) isolate the animal as much as possible and contact the owner’s veterinarian, state public health veterinarian, or state animal health official.

How to manage symptoms and prevent them from getting worse

- If you have a fever, stay hydrated and rest as much as possible. If your rash is painful, discuss pain control options with your provider.
- If you develop rash/blisters/bumps/spots in your mouth, around your eyes, or in your genital area, contact the clinic right away (360-384-0464)
- To avoid spreading the rash/bumps/blisters to other parts of your body, take the following precautions:
 - Do not use contact lenses until your rash is completely gone. If monkeypox gets in the eye it can cause permanent vision loss.
 - Avoid shaving areas of the body with rash or skin bumps/blisters since this can lead to spread of the virus
 - Try not to touch the rash/bumps/blisters on your skin. Wear gloves when changing dressings and wash your hands after touching the rash, skin, clothing, linens, or surfaces that may have had contact with your skin or rash.

Next steps

- Write down a list of everyone you’ve had close contact with since your symptoms first started; close contact includes someone who had physical contact with you or your clothing/sheets/towels, sexual contact, or spending more than 3 hours less than 6 feet apart while neither of you were wearing masks. Public Health will call you to review this list so that they can be offered a monkeypox vaccine (these people will not need to quarantine but will be assessed for symptoms of monkeypox).
- In the meantime, please tell your contacts that you tested positive for monkeypox and they should contact their doctor right away if they develop NEW rash, skin bumps/blisters or fever, chills, exhaustion, headache or backache.
- For questions about monkeypox symptoms: call the clinic 360-384-0464
- For general questions about monkeypox: call public health 360-383-8251
- Once the rash has completely healed and all scabs have fallen off, call the clinic to schedule an appointment to receive medical clearance to end isolation.
- After recovering from monkeypox, anyone who is sexually active should use condoms for at least 12 weeks.