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Monkeypox Virus: Patient Information After Testing

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You are receiving this handout because you've been tested for Monkeypox virus and are awaiting test results.

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 or contact with clothing/sheets/towels etc that an infected person used. While you are awaiting your test result:

- 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 a rash is present on the 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
- Monkeypox infection is more serious for pregnant women, children younger than 8 years old and immunocompromised people. Please try to avoid contact with people in these categories as much as possible.
- Do not share bedsheets, 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 can live on surfaces for at least 15 days and maybe longer
- Put coversheets, waterproof mattress covers, blankets, or tarps over things that you need to use and which 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.

Considerations for animals

- While you are awaiting your test results, 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.

How to manage symptoms and prevent them from getting worse

- If you have a fever, stay hydrated and rest as much as possible. 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 with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer after touching rash, skin, clothing, linens, or environmental surfaces that may have had contact with your skin or rash.

Next steps

- Test results should come back 2-4 days after testing
- Write down a list of everyone you've had contact with since your symptoms first started; Public Health will call you to review this list if you test positive. In the meantime, please tell your contacts that you are being evaluated 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