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Risk Management Division: Safety and Loss Prevention Unit Safety Bulletin—**REVISED**

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Monkeypox History

Monkeypox is an infectious viral disease that can occur in humans and some other animals. Monkeypox is a concern as it can spread from infected humans, animals, objects, and surfaces contaminated with the virus. This is not a new or novel disease like Corona-virus.

The virus was discovered in 1958 when it was first identified in monkeys used for research. The virus reservoir (where it lives, survives, and multiplies) is likely African rodents. A limited number of U.S. cases occurred previously in 2001 and 2003, and these were related to international travel or the importation of animals.

In May 2022, Monkeypox resurfaced in the U.S. The World Health Organization declared a public health emergency of international concern on July 23, 2022, and the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services declared a public health emergency on August 4, 2022. There are 2 separate Monkeypox variants circulating during the current worldwide outbreak.

The two variants are called Clade I and Clade II. The May 2022 Monkeypox case surge that the U.S. is experiencing is the Clade II variant, which is much less severe than Clade I.

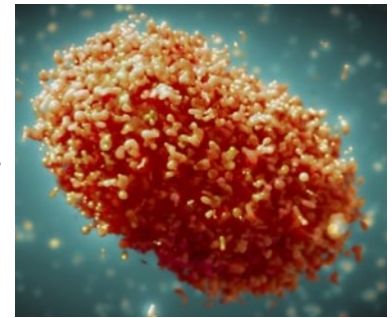
What You Need to Know About Monkeypox

How does Monkeypox Spread?

Monkeypox can spread to anyone:

- through close, personal, often skin-to-skin contact,
- prolonged face-to-face contact (6 ft. for 3 or more hrs.),
- direct contact with monkeypox rash, scabs, body fluids (including respiratory secretions) from a person with Monkeypox.

The virus can also spread by touching objects, fabrics (clothing, bedding, or towels), and surfaces that have been used by someone with Monkeypox. **It is not spread through brief conversations or by walking past someone.**



There are three ways Monkeypox virus can be transmitted to humans: **physical contact, body fluids, and respiratory droplets.**

What are the signs and symptoms?

Monkeypox might start with symptoms like the flu, with fever, low energy, swollen lymph nodes, and general body aches. These symptoms may occur between 5 to 21 days after exposure. As early as 1 to 3 days after developing a fever, rash or sores may develop. The sores progress through several stages, including scabs, before healing. Monkeypox looks similar to other skin abnormalities and rashes including herpes, chickenpox, measles, syphilis, bacterial skin infections, and some medication and skin allergies. It can look like pimples or blisters and can be painful and itchy. The rash may be located on or near the private areas, hands, feet, chest, face, or inside the mouth.

What can I do to lower my risk of getting Monkeypox?

People can take steps to lower their own risk from Monkeypox by avoiding:

- close skin-to-skin or face-to-face contact with people who have a rash that looks like Monkeypox,
- contact with pets and livestock suspected or confirmed as having Monkeypox,
- sharing eating utensils or cups with a person with Monkeypox or handling or touching the bedding, towels, or clothing of a person with Monkeypox.

When caring for others with Monkeypox symptoms, use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE, including an N95 respirator, gown, gloves, and eye protection). The risk of infection is further reduced by frequent handwashing, using soap and water or hand sanitizer with 60% alcohol. To clean objects or surfaces that may be contaminated with Monkeypox virus, **choose disinfectants from EPA's List Q** and follow the manufacturer's instructions.

What should I do if I suspect or have Monkeypox?

Vaccination can prevent monkeypox if given soon after exposure. If you have had confirmed exposure, contact the Health Department to find out if you should be vaccinated. Treatment is also available for individuals who have severe monkeypox or are at risk for it. Contact your healthcare provider to see if they offer it. It's important to notify your close contacts, as described above, that they may have been exposed to Monkeypox as soon as possible, so they can watch for signs and symptoms and consider getting vaccinated. If you are unable to notify your close contacts, your Health Department may be able to help. They may be able to notify your close contacts for you without disclosing your information.

