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Cleaning, Disinfection, and PPE Guidance for Monkeypox

About Monkeypox and exposure: Monkeypox is very different than COVID-19. It is much harder to catch (it's less transmissible) and the Clade II version of this virus, which is in the United States, is much less dangerous.

According to the CDC, direct skin to skin contact including close intimate contact has been identified as a predominant type of exposure for persons with Monkeypox in the United States. It is mostly spread by skin-to-skin contact with the lesions (an area of abnormal tissue, for example, a lump, bump, ulcer, sore, or colored area on the skin) of an infected person, body fluids, or with clothes or bedding that have been contaminated. Respiratory droplets containing Monkeypox virus can travel only a few feet, so prolonged (greater than 3 cumulative hrs.) face-to-face contact is required for infection transmission. Virus transmission takes closer, more direct contact, the kind of intimate contact that you would ***not*** have with someone on a subway or a plane.

Monkeypox survival, cleaning, and disinfection. Some questions have arisen regarding Monkeypox virus cleaning and disinfection. Viruses similar to Monkeypox can survive in linens, clothing and on environmental surfaces, particularly when in dark, cool, and low humidity environments. In one study, investigators found live virus in a patient's home after it was left unoccupied for 15 days. Studies show that other closely related viruses can survive in an environment, similar to a household, for weeks or months. Porous materials (bedding, clothing, towels, etc.) may harbor live (active) virus for longer periods of time than non-porous (plastic, glass, metal) surfaces.

This group of viruses are very sensitive to UV light. Despite their ability to persist in the environment, they are also sensitive to many disinfectants, and disinfection is recommended for all areas (such as the office, home, or vehicle) where a person with Monkeypox has spent time, as well as, for items considered to be potentially contaminated.

Monkeypox Disinfectant Selection

EPA has categorized Monkeypox as a Tier 1 virus that can be disinfected with relative ease. These disinfectants appear on **EPA's List Q** (Disinfectants for Emerging Viral Pathogens, EVP). Currently, there are no disinfectants currently registered for use against Monkeypox. However, all products with EVP claims have been tested against viruses that are more difficult to kill than Monkeypox.

This list contains products that EPA expects will kill (inactivate) Monkeypox when used in accordance with the manufacturer's directions.

- **Check that your product is EPA-registered (listed):** Find the EPA registration number on the product label.
- **Read the directions:** Follow the product's directions. Check "use sites" and "surface types" to make sure this is the right product for your surface. Next, read the "precautionary statements."
- **Pre-clean the surface:** Make sure to wash the surface with soap and water **if the directions mention pre-cleaning or if the surface is visibly dirty.** Dirt can keep the disinfectant from working. Some disinfectants have detergent so that a prewash may not be necessary.
- **Follow the contact time:** Follow the manufacturer's instructions for contact time. The surface should remain wet for the amount of time indicated to ensure the product is effective and in contact with the virus for a sufficient period of time. Reapply if necessary.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): Follow the manufacturer's instructions for use of personal protective equipment. Protective clothing used for cleaning activities should cover the skin.

CDC recommended PPE for cleaning Monkeypox at work includes:

- a gown [or disposable Tyvek-type suit],
- gloves [for example nitrile],
- eye protection, and
- a well-fitting mask or respirator [N95] should be used when cleaning areas where people with Monkeypox spent time.

Recommended Steps for Cleaning and Disinfection (following in the order shown below):

Do not dry dust or sweep as this may spread infectious particles. Wet cleaning methods are preferred, using disinfectant wipes, sprays, and mopping. Vacuuming is acceptable using a vacuum with a high efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter. Ensure the person vacuuming wears a well-fitting N95 respirator (preferably) or mask.

Focus on disinfecting items and surfaces that were in direct contact with the skin of the person with Monkeypox, or often in the presence of the person with Monkeypox, during isolation. If unsure, disinfect. Clean and disinfect in the following order:

1. General waste containment
   - Collect and contain in sealed bags any soiled waste such as bandages, paper towels, food packaging, and other general trash items.
2. Laundry
   - Gather contaminated clothing and linens before anything else in the room is cleaned. Do not shake the linens as this could spread infectious particles.
3. Hard surfaces and household items
4. Upholstered furniture and other soft furnishing
5. Carpet and flooring
6. Waste disposal

Hard Surfaces (and non-porous car interiors): Routinely clean and disinfect commonly touched surfaces and items (such as tabletops, counters, light switches, door handles, toilet flush handles/seats, and floors) using an EPA-registered disinfectant from EPA List Q in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Include interior surfaces of refrigerator, freezer, other appliances, interior cabinet spaces, or drawers if they have been accessed by the person with Monkeypox.

Non- Hard Surfaces (porous surfaces):

- If the person with monkeypox had direct skin contact and/or excessive drainage of fluids from rashes onto soft furnishings, such as upholstered furniture, carpets, rugs, and mattresses, steam cleaning can be considered. Discuss with state or local health authorities for further guidance.

- If the person with monkeypox had minimal contact with soft furnishings, disinfect the surface with a surface-appropriate disinfectant from EPA List Q.

Proper Disposal of Monkeypox Waste at Work: U.S. DOT indicated that waste contaminated with Clade II monkeypox virus should be managed as UN3291 Regulated Medical Waste (RMW) in the same manner as other potentially infectious medical waste (e.g. soiled dressings, contaminated sharps).

- Departments needing to dispose of Monkeypox waste who do not already have contracts for the removal of Regulated Medical Waste should contact their Procurement Officer to initiate this service.