

Monkeypox information sheet

WHAT ARE MONKEYPOX?

Monkeypox are a notifiable disease caused by a virus. The virus is closely related to the smallpox virus, which was eradicated by 1977 due to a consistent vaccination campaign throughout the world. In humans, the monkeypox virus can cause a disease similar to smallpox. However, in contrast to smallpox, the monkeypox virus is rarely deadly. People with immunodeficiencies, pregnant women and children are particularly at risk of more serious symptoms.

HOW DO MONKEYPOX SPREAD?

In Western and Central Africa, monkeypox are spread mainly through infected animals (rodents and monkeys). It spreads from person to person through contact with infectious skin lesions, via air droplets through speaking, coughing, sneezing or other body fluids as well as when having prolonged and close physical contact, e.g. through sexual intercourse. One can also contract it through sharing clothing, bedding, towels, sanitary items or office equipment or by inhaling contaminated dust such as through shaking out bedding.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

Usually, the first symptoms show up 5 to 14 days (at the latest 21 days) after exposure. These include fever, general exhaustion, headaches, muscle and body aches, gastrointestinal problems and frequently painfully swollen lymph nodes. After another 1 to 3 days, patients develop a skin rash or lesions (first, lesions with a flat base, then slightly raised firm lesions and finally, lesions filled with a fluid, which will become encrusted). The lesions are often discrete and can cause discomfort and itching. Lesions may also occur in the mouth cavity, as well as the genital or anal area and can be very painful. All skin lesions are infectious until they have healed and the scabs have fallen off.

HOW ARE MONKEYPOX DIAGNOSED?

Swab samples are taken from the lesions or from the throat and sent to a specialist laboratory where the virus can be detected by PCR testing. These swabs are taken by healthcare professionals.

IS THERE A VACCINE AGAINST OR TREATMENT FOR MONKEYPOX?

Common treatment helps lessen symptoms, for example against itching and pain. Serious cases can be treated with an antiviral medication.

A post-exposure vaccination with Jynneos® is available for high-risk contacts of a reported case of monkeypox. This should be administered as soon as possible after contact, ideally within 4 days (up to a maximum of 14 days) after the last contact.

Two vaccinations are scheduled at 28-day intervals. For persons who were vaccinated decades ago with the smallpox vaccines used at that time, one vaccination is sufficient, since a certain immunity can be assumed.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I HAVE BEEN EXPOSED TO SOMEONE WHO HAS MONKEYPOX OR IF I HAVE MONKEYPOX MYSELF?

If you have symptoms and have had contact with someone with monkeypox, you have to self-isolate at once and call 1450. If you have a confirmed monkeypox infection, you need to stay in self-isolation until the last crust has fallen off.

The official isolation period ends with a final medical examination after about 3 to 4 weeks.

Contacts of monkeypox cases should self-monitor for the development of symptoms, such as a fever, headaches, muscle and body aches or swollen lymph nodes for the following 21 days after exposure and inform the health authorities about their state of health on a daily basis. Avoid any physical and especially sexual contacts (also protected intercourse) during this period. Also, avoid contacts with immunocompromised people, children, pregnant women and pets.

WHERE DO I GET GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT MONKEYPOX?

Vienna Health Hotline – the health hotline of the City of Vienna at **1450** is available 24 hours a day.

Please turn over!



Guidance for persons infected with monkey-pox who are isolating at home

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO TO PREVENT THE DISEASE FROM SPREADING?

- Limit contact with others to a minimum! If you cannot avoid contact, keep a distance of at least 2m from other people. (Avoid any physical contact.)
- Isolate in a room or area separate from the other people in your home (stay in your own room)
- Wear an FFP2 mask when you leave your room
- Fully cover your skin lesions (bandages/clothing)
- Avoid contact with your pet (the disease might spread to pets)
- Wash your hands regularly with soap and water
- Do not share any items (e.g. towels, dishes) with other household members
- Sanitise the surfaces of bathroom/toilet every time you have used it
- Use an antiviral surface disinfectant
- Clean the surfaces you use on a daily basis (door handles, tables, smartphones, etc.)
- Wear clothes which you can wash at 60°C or higher or use an antiviral laundry sanitiser
- Avoid raising dust activities, such as fluffing up pillows or bed linen, or vacuuming
- Dispose contaminated waste in a tightly sealed bag in your household waste container

WHEN WILL ISOLATION END?

You need to isolate until it is assured that you are no longer at risk for spreading the infection to others. This is the case when all crusts have fallen off and all wounds have healed. You have to isolate for at least 21 days, sometimes even up to 28 days, after the first symptoms show up. You will receive an official order to self-isolate, which provides you with a date for the final medical examination that will be scheduled with your doctor. If your doctor agrees to your release during the final examination, the notice will automatically be cancelled and your isolation terminated immediately.

FINAL DISINFECTION OF YOUR HOME

Once your isolation has ended, the health authorities will carry out a final disinfection of your home. This procedure should follow within 3 days after discharge.

Further recommendations: Since your body fluids (e.g. sperm) may still be infectious after your isolation has ended, the use of condoms, as well as other safety precautions, is recommended for a further period of 3 months.

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