

# WHAT K-12 SCHOOLS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT MONKEYPOX

## BASIC INFORMATION

Monkeypox is a viral infection spread to others by direct contact with lesions or infected body fluids, or from exposure to respiratory droplets during prolonged face-to-face contact.

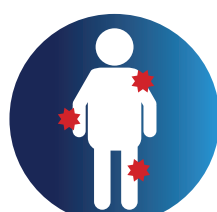
A person is infectious until scabs are gone and a fresh layer of skin has appeared.

Illness lasts 2-4 weeks.

## MONKEYPOX VIRUS SYMPTOMS



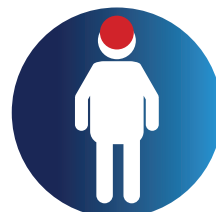
HIGH FEVER



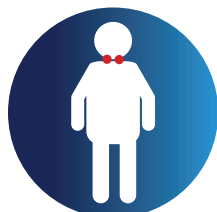
MUSCLE ACHES



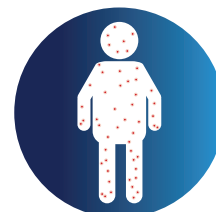
CHILLS



INTENSE HEADACHE



SWOLLEN LYMPH NODES



RASH

## WHAT SHOULD SCHOOLS COMMUNICATE TO FAMILIES?

There are very few pediatric cases of monkeypox in the U.S. and the risk of monkeypox spread in schools is low.

There are currently not enough cases to change any school activities.

The majority of cases occurring in children in K-12 schools have been due to close contact with caregivers.

There are many other childhood rashes that can be easily confused with monkeypox, including chickenpox; hand, foot, and mouth disease; measles; scabies; molluscum contagiosum; impetigo; and allergic skin rashes.

**If a child has a rash that is concerning, they should be evaluated by their physician.**

## TRANSMISSION

The virus can spread from person-to-person through:

- Direct contact with the infectious rash, scabs, or body fluids.
- Respiratory fluids from prolonged, face-to-face contact, or during intimate contact, such as kissing, cuddling, or sex.
- Touching items (such as clothing or linens) that previously touched the infectious rash or body fluids.
- Pregnant women can spread the virus to their fetus through the placenta.

## ANYONE CAN GET MONKEYPOX

- Blaming any one community may harm public health efforts and cause providers to miss monkeypox in other people.
- Cases have been detected among men who have sex with men but not exclusively.
- Anyone within 6 feet of a person infected with monkeypox for more than 3 hours or who have had skin-to-skin contact is considered a high-risk close contact.

## PREVENTION



Avoid close contact with people with monkeypox symptoms.



Avoid contact with any materials, such as bedding, towels, clothing, etc. that have been in contact with an infected person.



Isolate infected people away from others.

Wash your hands well with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer after contact with infected people.



Use personal protective equipment (PPE), including mask, eye protection, gloves, and gown, when caring for someone who is infected.



Sports involving skin-to-skin contact could be risky if one of the athletes has monkeypox.



*Towels should be bagged, not shaken, and surfaces should be thoroughly disinfected.*

**Avoid activities that could spread dried material from lesions (fans, dry dusting, sweeping, or vacuuming).**

**Use an EPA-registered disinfectant from List Q.**

## TREATMENT/VACCINATION

- Antivirals such as tecovirimat (TPOXX), may be recommended for people who are more likely to get severely ill, like patients with weakened immune systems.
- Vaccines such as JYNNEOS may prevent monkeypox in people who have been exposed to the virus.
- CDC does not recommend widespread vaccination against monkeypox at this time, however, vaccination may be recommended for some people who:
  - Are close contacts of people with monkeypox.
  - May have been exposed to the virus.
  - Have had multiple sexual partners in the last 14 days in an area with known monkeypox cases.

## RESPONSE TO CASES

- Infected students or staff should isolate away from others until there is full healing of the rash, i.e., scabs are gone, and a fresh layer of skin has appeared, which typically takes 2-4 weeks.
- Consult with Tarrant County Public Health (TCPH) before discontinuing isolation.
- Flexible, non-punitive sick leave policies for staff members are critical to prevent spread of monkeypox.
- Ensure access to handwashing with soap and water or hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Anyone who touches lesions, clothing, linens, or surfaces that may have had contact with lesions should wash their hands immediately.
- Contact TCPH to report positive cases. They will work with school nurses contact tracing and monitoring to help maintain confidentiality.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

[Congregate Living Settings | Monkeypox | Poxvirus | CDC](#)

[Tarrant County Public Health | Monkeypox](#)

[Tarrant County Public Health Call Center 817-248-6299, Option 4](#)

*This document is a compilation of CDC monkeypox guidance and is subject to change as we learn more about the virus. If the CDC releases guidance specifically geared towards K-12 schools, this document will be updated.*

