

## **Patient Information**

### **Safe Care in the Home for the Person with Monkeypox**

Background: Monkeypox is a viral infection that affects mainly the skin and mucous membranes. It is spread primarily through close contact with the infected person's skin lesions, including the crusts/scabs, or bodily secretions. This contact can be directly by touching the lesions or bodily fluids, indirectly by touching items that have been contaminated by the person's skin lesions or bodily fluids (e.g., bed linens), or by breathing in virus that has been dispersed into the environment. The person with monkeypox is infectious until the skin lesions have all healed: that is, all of the crusts have fallen off and been replaced by new skin. The guidance below is meant to decrease as much as possible the spread of monkeypox to household members and pets.

#### **Isolation**

Please follow the isolation guidance given to you by Public Health. Generally, it is recommended that people with monkeypox remain on isolation until the skin lesions have all healed. However, Public Health may give you different advice based on your specific situation and the location of your lesions.

#### **General prevention measures for the person with monkeypox**

- Avoid direct contact with household members who do not have monkeypox and with pets. This is especially important for groups at higher risk for severe disease such as children under 12 years old, immunocompromised individuals, and pregnant persons.
- Avoid having non-essential visitors in the home
- Avoid sexual contact with anyone until your skin lesions are completely healed
- Until further information is available, as a precautionary measure, it is recommended that you use condoms for 12 weeks after you recover from monkeypox for all sexual contact with other people
- If possible, have your own room and bathroom for use until your skin lesions are healed
  - Remain in your room, separate from other household members and pets, and leave the home only for essential medical visits that need to be in person
  - If you must share a bathroom, clean and disinfect surfaces immediately after use (see below) and put towels and washcloths into your dirty laundry for immediate washing and drying
- As much as possible, keep all your skin lesions covered when you are around others or outside your room
- Wear a medical mask if you have to be around others
- Do not share any personal items such as razor, toothbrush, sex toys, needles
- If you need medical attention, tell the healthcare provider that you have monkeypox
- Avoid using community transportation, such as buses

#### **General prevention measures for the person caring for the person with monkeypox**

- Wear a well-fitting medical mask and gloves when within 1 meter of the person with monkeypox
- In addition, consider wearing a covering, such as an apron or cover gown, and eye protection when providing personal care to the person with monkeypox
- Clean your hands with warm water and soap or an alcohol-based hand rub before putting on and after removing your gloves and after cleaning surfaces and objects
- Clean your hands with warm water and soap, rather than an alcohol-based hand rub, if they are visibly soiled

#### **Handling laundry**

- Laundry from patients with monkeypox can be done using a standard washing machine using hot water (i.e., 60°C) with detergent and a standard dryer using a high temperature setting to completely dry the laundry
- If you do not have access to a washing machine or dryer in your house or apartment, talk with Public Health
- To decrease the chance of coming into contact with monkeypox virus that might be on contaminated bedding, linens, or clothing:
  - The person with monkeypox should do their own laundry
  - Do the laundry separately from others in the household

- Carefully take the dirty laundry to the washing machine in a laundry basket that can be cleaned and disinfected or in a disposable garbage bag
- Do not shake or handle the dirty laundry in a way that could disperse the virus into the environment
  - Linens and bedding should be carefully lifted and rolled into a ball
  - Put the garbage bag used for the dirty laundry into a second garbage bag, close securely, and properly discard into the waste
- As you are doing your laundry, disinfect your laundry basket and clean and disinfect your room or contaminated objects and surfaces so that you don't contaminate what you have just cleaned
- Use a cleaned and disinfected laundry basket or new garbage bag for the clean laundry
- If the person with monkeypox cannot do their own laundry, the person who does the laundry should:
  - Wear a well-fitting medical mask and disposable gloves that will be discarded in the waste after use
  - Cover any skin that could come in contact with contaminated laundry (e.g., wear long pants and sleeves)
  - Launder any clothing that came in contact with the contaminated laundry the same way as above
  - Clean hands with soap and warm water or an alcohol-based hand rub after removal of gloves and other protective clothing, if hands are visibly soiled, and after cleaning contaminated surfaces

### **Cleaning and disinfection (surfaces and objects)**

- Clean and disinfect contaminated surfaces and objects that the person with monkeypox may have come in contact with (e.g., tabletops, countertops, toilets, door handles, light switches, computer keyboards) at least daily and before others might have contact with such items
  - Disposable gloves should be worn
  - If a surface or object is visibly soiled, first clean it with a household cleaning product followed by disinfection
  - Use a standard household disinfectant effective against viruses and follow the manufacturer's product instructions
  - If using household bleach to disinfect, mix 250 mL (1 cup) of water per 5 mL (1 teaspoon) bleach (5 % sodium hypochlorite) to achieve the recommended 0.1 % sodium hypochlorite solution
- Ideally, single-use disposable cleaning materials (e.g., disposable towels) should be used when possible
  - If disposable cleaning materials are not available, use a cloth or sponge once and then soak the used materials in a fresh disinfectant solution effective against viruses, or 0.1% sodium hypochlorite solution
  - If neither option is available, the cleaning materials should be discarded

### **Cleaning floors, furniture, and carpets**

- Floors should be wet mopped rather than swept or dry mopped, which can disperse virus into the environment
- Avoid vacuuming, which can disperse virus into the environment
- Try to avoid contaminating upholstered furniture and other materials that cannot be laundered by placing coversheets, waterproof mattress covers, blankets, or tarps over them
- Upholstered furniture and carpets should be steam cleaned where possible after all your skin lesions have healed
  - Visible soiling can be removed using commercially available cleaning products
- Consult Public Health if you have grossly soiled furniture

### **Dishware and utensils**

- Do not share dishes and other eating utensils with others unless they have been properly washed between uses
- Soiled dishes and eating utensils should be washed in a dishwasher or by hand with hot water and soap
- Dedicated utensils are unnecessary if utensils are properly washed before use by someone else

### **Waste management**

- Double bag all waste that could be contaminated with the monkeypox virus (e.g. dressings that have covered skin lesions, gloves, disposable cover gowns and aprons) and place in a covered waste bin until discarded in accordance with Public Health instructions