

MONKEYPOX

INFORMATION FOR TRANSPORT WORKERS

Monkeypox is a relatively rare disease caused by infection with the monkeypox virus. Monkeypox virus is part of the same family of viruses that used to cause smallpox. Monkeypox primarily occurs in central and West Africa but has now started spreading in different parts of the world.

KEY FACTS

- Monkeypox is caused by monkeypox virus and is transmitted from one person to another by close contact with lesions, body fluids, respiratory droplets and contaminated materials such as bedding.
- In West and Central Africa, you can also get it from infected rodents (rats, mice and squirrels) through their bite; touching skin or other body parts or eating their meats when not cooked properly.
- Monkeypox is usually a self-limiting disease with the symptoms lasting from 2 to 4 weeks. Severe cases can occur with some degree of fatality.
- Monkeypox typically presents clinically with fever, rash and swollen lymph nodes and may lead to a range of medical complications.
- An antiviral that was developed to treat smallpox (tecovirimat) was approved in January 2022 by the European Medicines Agency for the treatment of monkeypox.

HEALTH RISKS

- In most cases, the symptoms of monkeypox go away on their own within a few weeks. However, in some people, an infection can lead to medical complications and even death. New-born babies, children and people with underlying immune deficiencies may be at risk of more serious symptoms and death from monkeypox.
- Complications from monkeypox include secondary skin infections, pneumonia, confusion, and eye problems.
- It is important to note that death rates in different settings may differ due to a number of factors, such as access to health care services.

SYMPTOMS

If you get infected, it usually takes 1 to 3 weeks for first symptoms to appear. The first symptoms of Monkeypox include:

- A high temperature with shivering or chills.
- Headache.
- Muscle aches and backache.
- Swollen glands.
- Exhaustion.
- A rash which is sometimes confused with chickenpox usually appears 1 to 5 days after the first symptoms which often starts on the face then spread to other parts of body including genitals and anus.
- The symptoms usually clear up in a few weeks. While you have symptoms, you can pass the virus to other people.

TREATMENT

Like many other Viral infections, there is no cure or specific treatment for monkeypox. Symptoms normally resolve on their own without the need for treatment. Treatment is directed primarily at relieving the symptoms. If you get infected by monkeypox virus:

- Get plenty of rest and sleep.
- Drink fluids to prevent dehydration. If you're currently abroad, if possible only drink bottled water from a bottle that was properly sealed.
- Take medicine such as acetaminophen or paracetamol to reduce fever and pain.
- If you are taking medicine for another medical condition, talk to your healthcare provider before taking additional medication.

- The rash can be kept clean with sterilised water or antiseptic. Saltwater rinses can be used for lesions in the mouth, and warm baths with baking soda and Epsom salts can help with lesions. Lidocaine can be applied to oral and perianal lesions to relieve pain.
- Get medical advice if your symptoms persist. For severe cases of monkeypox, medical care by physicians/nurses experienced with the effects and progression of disease can save lives.
- An antiviral that was developed to treat smallpox (tecovirimat) was approved in January 2022 by the European Medicines Agency for the treatment of monkeypox.

PREVENTION

- Avoid close, skin-to-skin contact with people who have a rash that looks like monkeypox.
 - Do not touch the rash or scabs of a person with monkeypox.
 - Do not kiss, hug, cuddle or have sex with someone with monkeypox.
 - Do not share eating utensils or cups with a person with monkeypox.
- Do not handle or touch the bedding, towels, or clothing of a person with monkeypox.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- If you are in Central and West Africa, avoid contact with animals that can spread the virus, usually rodents and primates. Also, avoid sick or dead animals, as well as bedding or other materials they have touched.
- Remain isolated if you have a fever or respiratory symptoms, including sore throat, nasal congestion, or cough. Only go out to see a healthcare provider or for an emergency.



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ADDITIONAL HEALTH INFORMATION TO TRANSPORT WORKERS WHO TRAVEL BETWEEN COUNTRIES

Monkeypox infection rates vary in different parts of the world. Many transport workers travel beyond national boundaries. If you are in a country, where there is an outbreak of the monkeypox infection; you need to be extra careful and protect yourself.

As medical advice can change, we will periodically update this information. You can also keep yourself updated on the monkeypox infection on the WHO website at: <https://www.who.int/news-room/questions-and-answers/item/monkeypox>

You can be also in touch with the ITF through free ITF Wellbeing app or ITF Wellbeing Facebook page to get guidance on mental health issues.



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