Isolation Guidance for Monkeypox (MPV)

7/29/2022

Whatcom County Health Department Communicable Disease & Epidemiology

If you have monkeypox (MPV), or have symptoms of MPV and are waiting for test results or waiting to see a doctor, follow these recommendations.

**How long should I stay away from other people?**

People with MPV should isolate/stay away from others until the rash or sores have fully healed, the scabs have fallen off, and a fresh layer of intact skin has formed.

**What should I do to prevent spread to others?**

**Do not travel.**

**Limit exposure to others.**

- Isolate in a room or area separate from other household members and pets when possible
- Avoid contact with other people until the rash has resolved
- Stay home unless there is an emergency or you need follow-up care
- Other people without an essential need to be in the home (or the place you are isolating) should not visit
- Other household members should wear a respirator or a well-fitting, high-quality mask like an N95 when they are near you (e.g., within 6 feet)
- Do not have sex or any kind of sexual activity with other people.
- Do not share potentially contaminated items, such as sex toys, bed sheets, clothing, towels, washcloths, drinking glasses, or eating utensils
- Wear a well-fitting mask when in close contact with others at home (or the place you are isolating at)
- Try to avoid contaminating upholstered furniture and other porous materials that cannot go in the washing machine by placing coversheets, waterproof mattress covers, blankets, or tarps over these surfaces before you use them.
- Additional precautions such as steam cleaning can be considered if you are worried about contamination.

**Bathroom usage**

- If possible, use a separate bathroom if there are other people who live in the same household
- If there is not a separate bathroom in the home, then you should clean and disinfect surfaces such as counters, toilet seats, and faucets, using an EPA-registered disinfectant after using a shared space. This may include during activities like showering, using the toilet, or changing bandages that cover the rash. Consider disposable gloves when cleaning if the rash is on your hands

**Household disinfection**

- Routinely clean and disinfect commonly touched surfaces and items, such as counters, door knobs, or light switches, using an EPA-registered disinfectant in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions. Visit the CDC’s cleaning list website at [https://bit.ly/3clB1Ah](https://bit.ly/3clB1Ah) for a list of cleaning supplies.
- The CDC provides general guidance on cleaning and disinfecting non-healthcare settings, such as homes or cars, where an individual with MPV spent significant time (see CDC resource: [https://bit.ly/3Saen3V](https://bit.ly/3Saen3V))
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Hand hygiene and self-care

- Wash your hands with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand rub after touching MPV sores, clothing, linens, or environmental surfaces that may have had contact with rash material.
- Avoid the use of contact lenses to prevent accidental infection of the eye.
- Wash your hands with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand rub after touching MPV sores, clothing, linens, or environmental surfaces that may have had contact with rash material.
- Avoid use of contact lenses to prevent accidental infection of the eye.
- Avoid shaving rash-covered areas of the body as this can lead to spread of the virus.
- Cover all skin rashes to the extent possible by wearing long sleeves or long pants. Gloves can be worn to cover the rash on the hands when you are around others, like when receiving medical care.
- When possible, the person with MPV should change their own bandages and handle contaminated linens while wearing disposable gloves, followed by immediate handwashing with soap after removing gloves.
- As a last resort, if you need help with these activities, a household member can help you but should avoid physical contact as much as possible and should wear, at a minimum, disposable medical gloves and a well-fitting mask or respirator. Any clothing that touches the rash should be immediately laundered. Gloves should be thrown away of after use, followed by handwashing with soap and water.
- Contain and dispose of contaminated waste, such as dressings, bandages, or disposable gloves. See Disinfecting Home and Other Non-Healthcare Settings at https://bit.ly/3Saen3V

Considerations for animals

- People with MPV should avoid contact with animals (specifically mammals), including pets.
  - If possible, friends or family members should care for healthy animals until the owner has fully recovered.
  - Keep any potentially infectious bandages, textiles (such as clothes, bedding), and other items away from pets, other domestic animals, and wildlife.
  - In general, any mammal could get sick with MPV. Doctors do not think other animals such as reptiles, fish, or birds can be infected.
- If you notice an animal that had contact with an infected person and looks sick (such as lack of energy, lack of appetite, coughing, bloating, nasal or eye secretions or crust, fever, rash, or sores) contact a veterinarian, state public health veterinarian, or state animal health official.

Contact information

Communicable Disease & Epidemiology
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360-778-6100 Main call line
360-715-2588 After hours answering service – available after 4:30pm and weekends