



Monkeypox

Definition:

Monkeypox is a rare disease caused by infection with the monkeypox virus. Monkeypox virus belongs to the *Orthopoxvirus* genus in the family *Poxviridae*. The *Orthopoxvirus* genus also includes variola virus (which causes smallpox), vaccinia virus (used in the smallpox vaccine), and cowpox virus. Monkeypox is not related to chickenpox.

Signs and symptoms:

Monkeypox symptoms may begin with fever, lymphadenopathy, head and body aches, and sometimes vomiting. A rash then spreads and progresses to raised bumps and pus-filled blisters. These will crust, scab, and fall off within two to four weeks.

In the 2022 outbreak, the rash has occurred before the prodromal symptoms of fever, lymphadenopathy head and body aches.

Transmission:

Monkeypox spreads in different ways. The virus can spread from person-to-person through:

- direct contact with the infectious rash, scabs, or body fluids
- respiratory secretions during prolonged, face-to-face contact, or during intimate physical contact, such as kissing, cuddling, or sex
- touching items (such as clothing or linens) that previously touched the infectious rash or body fluids

It's also possible for people to get monkeypox from infected animals, either by being scratched or bitten by the animal or by preparing or eating meat or using products from an infected animal.

Monkeypox can spread from the time symptoms start until the rash has fully healed and a fresh layer of skin has formed. The illness typically lasts 2-4 weeks. People who do not have monkeypox symptoms cannot spread the virus to others.

Diagnosis:

Monkeypox can be diagnosed by a healthcare provider through clinical evaluation and laboratory testing.

Role of the School Nurse:

Prevention:

- Promote proper hand washing
- Vaccination is available for individuals exposed to a monkeypox case, as well as to individuals who meet certain higher risk criteria

Treatment Recommendations:

- Antivirals are available to individuals who meet certain criteria

Exclusions:

- Individuals with monkeypox should isolate until rash has fully resolved, the scabs have fallen off, and a fresh layer of intact skin has formed

Reporting Requirements

- Monkeypox is a reportable disease – report to Maine CDC at 1-800-821-5821

Resources:

- Maine CDC website (including fact sheet) www.maine.gov/dhhs/monkeypox
- Federal CDC website <https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/index.html>