

## Monkeypox At Home Guidance

### Isolation

- People with monkeypox should isolate until rash has fully resolved, the scabs have fallen off, and a fresh layer of intact skin has formed.
- People with monkeypox should follow these recommendations until cleared by state or local public health officials:
  - Do not leave the home except as required for emergencies or follow-up medical care.
  - Friends, family or others without an essential need to be in the home should not visit.
  - Avoid close contact with others.
  - Avoid close contact with pets in the home and other animals.
  - Do not engage in sexual activity that involves direct physical contact.
  - Do not share potentially contaminated items, such as bed linens, clothing, towels, wash cloths, drinking glasses or eating utensils.
  - Routinely clean and disinfect commonly touched surfaces and items, such as counters or light switches, using an [EPA-registered disinfectant](#) (such as [List Q](#)) in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
  - Wear well-fitting source control (e.g., medical mask) when in close contact with others at home.
  - Avoid use of contact lenses to prevent inadvertent infection of the eye.
  - Avoid shaving rash-covered areas of the body as this can lead to spread of the virus.
- Bathroom usage:
  - If possible, use a separate bathroom if there are others who live in the same household.
  - If there is not a separate bathroom in the home, the patient should clean and disinfect surfaces such as counters, toilet seats, faucets, using an EPA-registered disinfectant (such as [List Q](#)) after using a shared space. This may include during activities like showering, using the toilet, or changing bandages that cover the rash. Consider disposable glove use while cleaning if rash is present on the hands.
- Limit exposure to others:
  - Avoid contact with unaffected individuals until the rash has resolved, the scabs have fallen off, and a fresh layer of intact skin has formed.
  - Isolate in a room or area separate from other household members and pets when possible.
  - Limit use of spaces, items, and food that are shared with other household members.
  - Do not share dishes and other eating utensils. It is not necessary for the infected person to use separate utensils if properly washed. Wash soiled dishes and eating utensils in a dishwasher or by hand with warm water and soap.
- Limit contamination within household:
  - Try to avoid contaminating upholstered furniture and other porous materials that cannot be laundered by placing coversheets, waterproof mattress covers, blankets, or tarps over these surfaces.
  - Additional precautions such as steam cleaning can be considered if there is concern about contamination.
- Considerations for isolating with animals in the home:

- People with monkeypox 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 may become infected with monkeypox. It is not thought that other animals such as reptiles, fish or birds can be infected.
- If you notice an animal that had contact with an infected person appears sick (such as lethargy, lack of appetite, coughing, bloating, nasal or eye secretions or crust, fever, rash) contact the owner's veterinarian, state public health veterinarian, or state animal health official.

## Hand Hygiene, Source Control, & PPE

- Hand hygiene – the use of an alcohol-based hand rub or hand washing with soap and water – should be performed by people with monkeypox and household contacts after touching rash material, clothing, linens, or environmental surfaces that may have had contact with rash material.
- Cover all skin rashes to the extent possible by wearing long sleeves or long pants. Gloves can be considered for covering rash on the hands when not in isolation such as when receiving medical care.
- People with monkeypox should use well-fitting source control (e.g., medical mask), if close contact with others cannot be avoided, such as when receiving medical care.
- Other household members should wear a respirator or a well-fitting mask when in close contact (e.g., within 6 feet) with the person with monkeypox for more than a brief encounter.
- When possible, the person with monkeypox should change their own bandages and handle contaminated linens while wearing disposable gloves, followed by immediate handwashing after removing gloves.
  - As a last resort, if assistance is needed with these activities, a household member should avoid extensive contact and wear, at a minimum, disposable medical gloves and a well-fitting mask or respirator. Any clothing that contacts the rash during dressing changes should be immediately laundered. Gloves should be disposed of after use, followed by handwashing.
- Contain and dispose of contaminated waste, such as dressings, bandages, or disposable gloves.

## Disinfection of the Home and Non-Healthcare Settings

### Purpose of Home Disinfection

People with monkeypox who do not require hospitalization may be isolated at home. Monkeypox spreads between people through direct contact with an infectious rash, body fluids, or by respiratory secretions during prolonged, face-to-face contact. Transmission of *Monkeypox virus* is possible from the onset of the first symptoms until the scabs have separated and the skin has fully healed. During the infectious period, body fluids, respiratory secretions, and lesion material from people with monkeypox can contaminate the environment. Poxviruses are known to be hardy and can survive in linens, clothing and on environmental surfaces; particularly when in dark, cool, and low humidity environments. In one study, investigators found

live virus 15 days after a patient's home was left unoccupied. Studies show that other closely related Orthopoxviruses can survive in an environment, similar to a household, for weeks or months. Porous materials (bedding, clothing, etc.) may harbor live virus for longer periods of time than non-porous (plastic, glass, metal) surfaces.

Orthopoxviruses are very sensitive to UV light. Despite the ability of Orthopoxviruses to persist in the environment, they are also sensitive to many disinfectants, and disinfection is recommended for all areas (such as home and vehicle) where a person with monkeypox has spent time, as well as, for items considered to be potentially contaminated.

## Disinfectant

Use an [EPA-registered](#) disinfectant, in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Follow all manufacturer directions for use, including concentration, contact time, and care and handling. When choosing a disinfectant, it is important to consider any potential health hazards, and do not mix disinfectants or add other chemicals.

Follow these steps for safe and effective disinfectant use:

- **Check that your product is EPA-registered:** Find the EPA registration number on the product.
- **Read the directions:** Follow the product's directions. Check "use sites" and "surface types" to make sure this is the right product for your surface. Next, read the "precautionary statements."
- **Pre-clean the surface:** Make sure to wash the surface with soap and water if the directions mention pre-cleaning or if the surface is visibly dirty. Dirt can keep the disinfectant from working.
- **Follow the contact time:** Follow the instructions: The surface should remain wet for the amount of time indicated to ensure the product is effective. Reapply if necessary.

## Cleaning and Disinfection

During isolation at home, people with monkeypox should clean and disinfect the spaces they occupy regularly to limit household contamination.

- **ISOLATING ALONE IN HOME:** People with monkeypox who are isolating alone at home should regularly clean and disinfect the spaces they occupy, including commonly touched surfaces and items, to limit household contamination. Perform hand hygiene afterwards using an alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR) that contains at least 60% alcohol, or soap and water if ABHR is unavailable.
- **ISOLATING WITH OTHERS IN HOME:** People with monkeypox who are isolating in a home with others who do not have monkeypox should follow the isolation and infection control guidance above, and any shared spaces, appliances, or items should be disinfected immediately following use.

People who have recovered from monkeypox and whose isolation period has ended should conduct a thorough disinfection of all the spaces within the home that they had been in contact with. Follow the steps below to minimize risk of infection to others in your home after recovery.

- If cleaning and disinfection is done by someone other than the person with monkeypox, that person should wear, at a minimum, disposable medical gloves and a respirator or well-fitting mask.
- Standard clothing that fully covers the skin should be worn, and then immediately laundered according to recommendations below.
- Hand hygiene should be performed using an ABHR, or soap and water if ABHR is unavailable.
- Focus on disinfecting items and surfaces that were in direct contact with the skin of the person with monkeypox, or often in the presence of the person with monkeypox, during isolation. If unsure, disinfect.
- Do not dry dust or sweep as this may spread infectious particles.
  - Wet cleaning methods are preferred such as disinfectant wipes, sprays, and mopping.
  - Vacuuming is acceptable using a vacuum with a high-efficiency air filter. If not available, ensure the person vacuuming wears a well-fitting mask or respirator.
- Clean and disinfect household in the following order:
  - General waste containment: Collect and contain in a sealed bag any soiled waste such as bandages, paper towels, food packaging, and other general trash items.
  - Laundry: Gather contaminated clothing and linens before anything else in the room is cleaned. Do not shake the linens as this could spread infectious particles.
  - Hard surfaces and household items
  - Upholstered furniture and other soft furnishing
  - Carpet and flooring
  - Waste disposal

## Laundry

Used or contaminated clothing, linens and bedding materials, towels, and other fabric items should be contained until laundering. When at all possible, people with monkeypox should handle and launder their own soiled laundry. Laundry should not be mixed with that of other members of the household.

### ***Follow these laundering procedures:***

- Handle soiled laundry according to standard practices, avoiding contact with contaminants from the rash that may be present on the laundry.
- Soiled laundry should never be shaken or handled in a manner that may spread infectious particles.
- In-home laundry facilities:
  - Transfer soiled laundry items to be laundered in an impermeable container or bag that can be disinfected afterwards. Alternatively, a fabric bag may be used that can also be laundered along with the soiled items.

o Wash laundry in a standard washing machine with detergent, following label instructions. Laundry sanitizers may be used but are not necessary.

- In-home laundry facilities not available:

o When in-home laundry facilities (facilities not shared with other households) are not available, individuals should coordinate with their local public health department to determine appropriate laundering options.

## Hard Surfaces (and non-porous car interiors)

Routinely clean and disinfect commonly touched surfaces and items (such as counters or light switches) using an [EPA-registered disinfectant](#) in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

- This includes surfaces like tables, countertops, door handles, toilet flush handles, faucets, light switches, and floors.

- Include interior surfaces of refrigerator, freezer, other appliances, interior cabinet spaces, or drawers if they have been accessed by the person with monkeypox.

- Items and surfaces within the home that have likely not been in contact with the person while sick with monkeypox do not need to be disinfected.

o This includes clothing and items in drawers or boxes that have not been in contact with, or in the direct presence of the person with monkeypox.

- Wash soiled dishes and eating utensils in a dishwasher with detergent and hot water or by hand with hot water and dish soap.

## Upholstered Furniture, Carpet and Soft Furnishing (and porous car interiors)

- If the person with monkeypox had direct skin contact and/or excessive drainage of fluids from rashes onto soft furnishings, such as upholstered furniture, carpets, rugs, and mattresses, steam cleaning can be considered. Discuss with state or local health authorities for further guidance.

- If the person with monkeypox had minimal contact with soft furnishings, disinfect the surface with a surface-appropriate disinfectant.

## Waste Disposal

Generally, management of waste from homes, including those of people with monkeypox isolating at home, should continue as normal. Municipal waste management systems routinely collect and dispose of waste materials from individuals with infectious diseases and can do so safely using existing procedures.

- The person with monkeypox should use a dedicated, lined trash can in the room where they are isolating.

o Any gloves, bandages, or other waste and disposable items that have been in direct contact with skin should be placed in a sealed plastic bag, then thrown away in the dedicated trash can.

o The person with monkeypox or other household members should use gloves when removing garbage bags and handling and disposing of trash.

## Reference

CDC Monkeypox website: <https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/clinicians/infection-control-home.html>