



# Monkeypox

## Guidance for Self-Isolation

If you have been tested for Monkeypox and are awaiting results, you must remain isolated until you receive your result.

- If negative, you may discontinue isolation and consult with your health care provider if you have medical concerns or questions regarding your result.
- If positive, you must continue to isolate and follow the instructions below. Ending isolation will be done in consultation with an investigator from the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit.

### **What is self-isolation?**

- Self-isolation is used to prevent monkeypox from spreading to others.
- While on self-isolation you must stay home and away from other people.
- Do not attend work, school, or public areas.
- You will need to make arrangements to remain isolated. This may include talking to your employer, finding support for children/dependents/pets, and ensuring you have the supplies you need at home, such as groceries and medications.

### **Can I attend medical appointments?**

- All non-urgent appointments should be postponed until isolation is completed.
- If you must leave your house to see a health care provider, or require urgent medical care, wear a medical mask, perform hand hygiene, cover any rash/lesions and notify them that you are a suspect or confirmed case of monkeypox.
- Use your own private vehicle where possible for transportation. If travelling as a passenger, maintain distance from others as feasible and wear a medical mask, cover any rash/lesions, and perform hand hygiene.

### **How can I protect myself and others in my home?**

- Avoid close contact with others. Avoid contact with those at higher risk of severe monkeypox illness including people who are immunosuppressed or pregnant, and/or children under 12 years of age.
- A medical mask should be used, especially if respiratory symptoms such as a cough or sore throat are present.

- Staying in a separate room/area away from other household members if possible and using a separate bathroom if available/feasible:
  - Isolating in a separate room/area should be prioritized for persons with extensive lesions that cannot easily be covered, draining/weeping lesions, or respiratory symptoms.
- Cover skin lesions as much as possible (e.g., bandages, long sleeves, long pants). Gloves can be considered for covering lesions on the hands when not in isolation (e.g., emergencies, medical care).
- Do not share items that could be contaminated by the lesions (e.g., bed linens, clothing, towels, wash cloths).
- Optimizing indoor air quality (e.g., open windows where possible when in a shared indoor space).
- Persons without an essential need to be in the home should not visit.
- Abstain from all sexual activity.
- Avoid use of contact lenses to prevent inadvertent infection of the eye.
- Avoid shaving areas of the body with lesions as this can lead to spread of the virus.

### ***Do you have any advice for caregivers and household members?***

- Designate one person, if possible, to care for the person who is self-isolating (this person should ideally not be immunosuppressed or pregnant).
- Caregivers and household members should wear a medical mask when entering the case's isolation space (e.g., to deliver food, change linens, etc.).
- Caregivers should wear a medical mask and disposable gloves for direct contact with lesions. These should be disposed of after single use.
- Caregivers should perform hand hygiene regularly, including after touching skin lesions or lesion material, before putting on and after removing gloves, or after handling clothing, linens, or environmental surfaces that may have come into contact with fluid from lesions.

### ***Any advice for cleaning/disinfection in the home environment?***

- Clean and disinfect contaminated shared surfaces (e.g., bathroom) after use by the person isolating.
- No special cleaning products are required, usual household cleaning and Health Canada approved disinfecting products are sufficient to inactivate the virus. These should be used as per manufacturer instructions, including following recommended contact times, where available.
- Do not share dishes or utensils when eating; however, dishes/utensils can be used by others in the home if these are properly washed between uses.
- Avoid direct contact with upholstered furniture and absorbent 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.

### ***How do I handle and dispose of waste?***

- Discard contaminated items directly into a waste container and do not touch the outside of the waste container or other surfaces when disposing.
- Double bag waste using strong bags, securely tied, and store the waste in a secure bin until municipal pick-up. Wear gloves if handling bags and wash hands after removing gloves.

### ***Any advice for handling soiled laundry/linens?***

- Avoid direct contact when handling contaminated laundry/linens (i.e., wear disposable gloves).
- Do not shake or agitate soiled laundry in a way that could spread infectious particles.
- Washing laundry in a standard washing machine with warm water and detergent is acceptable. If machine is shared, use a disinfectant wipe to disinfect laundry machine buttons and handles.

### ***Can I still have contact with animals?***

- Avoid all contact with wild animals, livestock, and poultry.
- Keep your pets in the home. If possible, ask someone else in your home who is not sick to care for your pets.
- Avoid close or prolonged contact with pets, including touching, snuggling, and kissing, especially if you have lesions on the face, hands, or arms.
- Take precautions when providing care for pets:
  - Wear a mask when in the same room as your pet, especially if you have lesions in your mouth or are coughing/sneezing.
  - Wash your hands with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand rub immediately before and after touching pets, their food, or supplies.
  - If you have lesions on your skin, cover them with clean clothes or bandages to prevent direct contact with pets, their food, or supplies. If you have lesions on your hands, wear disposable gloves.
- If you notice an animal that had contact with an infected person appearing sick (e.g., lethargy, lack of appetite, coughing, bloating, nasal or ocular secretions or crust, fever, pox lesions) contact a veterinarian for assessment.