

The National Society of Dental Practitioners and the Dentist's Advantage Insurance Program for Dentists

RISK MANAGEMENT ALERT

CDC Urges Health Care Providers to be on Lookout for Monkeypox Symptoms, Including Oral Lesions

August 22, 2022

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is urging health care providers, including dentists, to be alert for patients with [symptoms](#) consistent with monkeypox, including oral lesions, and refer them for testing. Symptoms include a [rash](#) that can appear on various parts of the body, including inside the mouth and on the face, as well as fever, headache, muscle aches, backache, swollen lymph nodes, chills, exhaustion and respiratory symptoms, including sore throat, nasal congestion and cough.

Monkeypox most commonly [spreads](#) through direct contact with body fluids or sores on the body of someone who has monkeypox or with materials or surfaces that have touched body fluids or sores. The disease can also spread through respiratory secretions when people have prolonged face-to-face contact. Although most cases in the [current outbreak](#) to date have occurred among gay and bisexual men, and transgender people who have sex with men, any patient, regardless of sexual or gender identity, with a rash consistent with monkeypox should be considered for testing. Close physical contact with a person's infectious lesions or respiratory secretions or exposure to contaminated materials such as clothing or bedding can result in transmission.

The CDC [recommends](#) that tests should be performed on persons for whom monkeypox is suspected based on clinical presentation and [epidemiologic criteria](#). Those who have been exposed to monkeypox or those at higher risk of exposure are recommended to get [vaccinated](#) against monkeypox. While there are no treatments specifically for monkeypox, antiviral drugs developed for smallpox can also be used to treat monkeypox, [according to the CDC](#).

For more information on monkeypox:

- CDC, 2022 Monkeypox outbreak webpage: <https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/response/2022/index.html>.
- WHO Monkeypox updates: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/situations/monkeypox-oubreak-2022>.
- NYC Department of Health, Monkeypox: Information for providers: <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/providers/health-topics/monkeypox.page>
- New Jersey Hospital Association, Monkeypox toolkit: <https://www.njha.com/resources/toolkits/monkeypox-toolkit/>

Selected resources for communicating with patients about monkeypox:

- CDC, Monkeypox information: <https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/index.html>
- California Department of Health, Monkeypox communications toolkit: <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/OPA/Pages/Communications-Toolkits/Monkeypox.aspx>
- New York City Department of Health, Monkeypox: <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/monkeypox.page>

For more information on infection control and sterilization in the dental healthcare setting:

- CDC, Infection Prevention & Control in Dental Settings: www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/infectioncontrol/index.html
- ADA, Infection Control and Sterilization: <https://www.ada.org/resources/research/science-and-research-institute/oral-health-topics/infection-control-and-sterilization>.

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