

Dear Parent or Guardian,

You are being provided with this fact sheet:

☐ because you or your child may have been exposed to Mpox. If you believe that your child has Mpox, contact your healthcare provider. Notify your childcare provider, preschool, or school *immediately* after a diagnosis has been made.

☐ for informational purposes only

What is Mpox?

Mpox is a contagious illness caused by the Mpox virus, a type of pox virus which is related to the smallpox virus. Historically, Mpox has only been documented in children and adolescents living in regions of the world where the disease occurs regularly. There have been very few cases of Mpox in children in the United States during this current outbreak.

What are symptoms of Mpox?

Mpox illness in children is expected to be similar to infections in adults, including the appearance of a rash.

- Mpox has a characteristic rash that changes in appearance on the skin over time, but it can look similar to other more common rashes seen in children.
- Typically, the rash will begin as a red, mostly flat rash (maculopapular), then progress to blister like lesions (vesicles), pus-filled lesions (pustules), and then scabs.
- An infected person may have only one lesion or may have many lesions covering multiple areas of the body.
- Other symptoms may show up before the rash appears, including fever, lymph node swelling, fatigue, or headache. These symptoms are not always present, and it is possible that a person will only have the rash.
- A person infected with Mpox may rarely have severe complications such as bacterial skin infections, complications affecting the brain (encephalitis), pneumonia, an infection in the blood (sepsis) or scarring that may affect the eyes.

How is Mpox spread?

Mpox is mostly spread through close, prolonged contact with a person who has Mpox virus infection. This includes by direct contact with the Mpox rash, scabs, or bodily fluids. Touching objects, fabrics (clothing, bedding, or towels), or surfaces that have been used by someone with Mpox.

Mpox or contact with respiratory droplets or secretions may also spread Mpox. People with Mpox are not contagious until the onset of symptoms. Individuals with Mpox virus infection remain contagious until all the lesions or rash has turned into scabs, fallen off, and a fresh, unbroken layer of skin forms beneath.

How is Mpox diagnosed?

Mpox is diagnosed by a healthcare provider after examining the rash and considering any exposures to Mpox. If a healthcare provider determines that the rash is consistent with a Mpox rash, they will take swabs of the rash or lesions. These swabs will be tested for Mpox DNA by a laboratory test called polymerase chain reaction (PCR). If a healthcare provider performs a test for Mpox, your child should isolate from others while awaiting test results.

What should I do if my child has Mpox?

Children should be closely monitored throughout their illness for progression of their infection.

- Your child must be kept home and isolated within the home to the extent possible, considering caregiving needs. When possible, limit the number of caregivers to one person.
- Lesions should be fully covered at all times with bandages and a layer of clothing when possible. It is important to prevent scratching of lesions, as this can move virus from one area of the body to the other and cause the rash to spread. It is particularly important to prevent children from touching their eyes while they have this rash.
- Good, frequent handwashing with soap and warm water is recommended and younger children should be supervised during handwashing.
- Children 2 years and older should wear well-fitting face masks when unable to isolate in the home.
- Caregivers within 6 feet of the child should also wear a mask.
- Caregivers should wear disposable gloves, especially for bandage changes and baths.
- If children are using a shared bathroom, wipe the toilet seat and other hard surfaces with a disinfectant wipe after each use wearing disposable gloves.
- Clothing, towels, bedding, dishes, food, utensils, or drinks must not be shared while sick.
- Children should not have direct contact with any pets in the home, and pets (e.g., dogs, cats, rabbits, and pet rodents including mice, rats, guinea pigs, hamsters) should be kept away from garbage, clothing, bedding or other materials in contact with your child.
- Laundry created while your child is sick should be stored in a plastic bag in their room and may be carefully laundered on hot water settings with a high heat dry cycle at the end of their illness. Wear gloves and a mask while handling laundry and take care to transfer laundry from the bag to the washing machine without shaking or otherwise spreading scab materials.
- Your child may discontinue isolation once all the scabs have fallen off their body and have formed a new unbroken layer of skin beneath. Your childcare provider may require a doctor's note to return to care.

- If you have concerns for worsening symptoms while your child is sick, contact your healthcare provider and let them know that your child has Mpox.

How is Mpox treated?

Treatment is available. Treatment should be considered on a case-by-case basis and is a decision made by the healthcare provider and patient or guardian.

What should I do if my child has been exposed to Mpox?

If your child has been exposed to Mpox, they will need to be closely monitored for symptoms for 21 days after the exposure. **Daily, prior to drop off at childcare you must do:**

- A visual inspection for rash across the entire body, including in genital and anal regions and in the mouth
- A temperature check

If your child remains symptom free, then they do not need to isolate or be excluded from public settings. If at any time during the 21 days your child develops symptoms, exclude them immediately from the public setting, including childcare or school and take them to a healthcare provider for evaluation. Call the healthcare office ahead of time to let them know your child has been exposed to Mpox. In certain situations, your healthcare provider may recommend the Mpox vaccine (JYNNEOS) which is available to children who have experienced high-risk exposure with a known case of Mpox. The JYNNEOS vaccine is authorized for use in children under the Federal Drug Administration's Emergency Use Authorization.

How is Mpox prevented?

Mpox is prevented by avoiding close contact with other people who have Mpox virus infections and by avoiding sharing objects with other people who have Mpox virus infections while they are sick. Frequent, thorough handwashing with soap and warm water can help reduce likelihood of infection. For children who have had a high-risk exposure with a known case of Mpox, consideration of the JYNNEOS vaccine for your child may be discussed with a healthcare provider to help prevent the onset of symptoms or progression of disease.

Does my child need to be excluded from group settings?

If your child develops symptoms that might be Mpox, they should be immediately excluded from public settings including childcare or school. If your child has been exposed to Mpox, they do not need to be excluded unless they develop symptoms. Please note that your specific childcare program may have different rules for exclusion.

Resources

[Schools & Child Care](#) | [Mpox](#) | [Poxvirus](#) | [CDC](#)

[Mpox resources - King County](#)

<https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/Mpox/clinicians/pediatric.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/Mpox/specific-settings/home-disinfection.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/Mpox/specific-settings/pets-in-homes.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/Mpox/prevention/protect-yourself.html>

This document was printed from the Seattle King County Child Care Program website by your child care or school. It is for information only and is not meant as a substitute for consultation with your health care provider. This document was last reviewed 9/8/2022.