

Monkeypox Guidance for Healthcare Providers

Dear Colleagues,

Maricopa County Department of Public Health (MCDPH) issued a [press release](#) announcing an increasing number of monkeypox cases in the county. We currently have 10 cases with case investigation and contact tracing ongoing. MCDPH is instructing contacts of individuals who tested positive for monkeypox to monitor themselves for symptoms and providing post-exposure prophylaxis (JYNNEOS vaccine) to those with higher risk exposures.

It is important that our provider community consider monkeypox in their differential diagnosis for those who have a [rash consistent with monkeypox](#) and/or epidemiological risk factors for exposure to monkeypox ([CDC link](#)). As most cases of monkeypox resolve without treatment and are not severe, referral for testing to local emergency departments/urgent care centers is not usually necessary.

As announced in a MCDPH SURV Alert on July 6, **Monkeypox testing is now commercially available in Maricopa County.** As of July 13, [Quest Diagnostics](#), [LabCorp](#) and [Mayo Clinic Laboratories](#) offer commercial testing. Please contact your commercial laboratory provider to determine if monkeypox testing is available. All providers should have the capacity to test for monkeypox.

Providers who suspect monkeypox in a patient should ensure infection control precautions (see below) are implemented while testing is in process. Suspect cases do not need to be reported to MCDPH. Please continue to report positive lab results to 602-506-3747. If your practice does not have access to commercial testing, collect specimens and call MCDPH at 602-506-3747 during regular business hours to arrange for testing at the Arizona State Public Health Laboratory.

Specimen collection for monkeypox testing:

- Use two sterile synthetic swabs (including, but not limited to polyester, nylon, or Dacron) with a plastic, wood, or thin aluminum shaft. Do not use cotton swabs.
- Swab the lesion vigorously to collect adequate DNA. It is not necessary to de-roof the lesion before swabbing.

- Break off the end of each swab's applicator into a 1.5- or 2-mL screw-capped tube with O-ring or place the entire swab in a sterile container (such as a sterile urine collection cup) that has a gasket seal and is able to be shipped under the required conditions.
- Specimens should be stored refrigerated (2-8°C) or frozen (-20°C or lower) within an hour of collection.
- See the following links for specific laboratory specimen collection guidance:
 - [Labcorp](#)
 - [Quest Diagnostics](#)
 - [Mayo Clinic](#)
 - [CDC](#)

Infection control guidance:

- Monkeypox is primarily spread by direct skin-to-skin contact. Out of an abundance of caution, CDC recommends the following PPE to be worn by healthcare personnel who enter the patient's room:
 - Gown
 - Gloves
 - Eye protection (i.e., goggles or face shield that covers the front & sides of face)
 - NIOSH-approved particulate respirator equipped with N95 filters or higher
 - Airborne isolation rooms are **NOT** required

For the purpose of specimen collection, at a minimum MCDPH recommends providers wear gown, gloves and a face mask.

- For **Outpatient** management:
 - When monkeypox is suspected, instruct the patient to self-isolate at home until notified of negative monkeypox testing, cleared by public health, or all the skin lesions have scabbed over and a new layer of skin has formed. They should avoid close contact (and sharing items such as linens) with other people and animals, including pets.
 - Patients should wear a mask and cover all lesions if they must be around others in their homes if close, face-to-face contact is likely.

Antiviral Treatment for Confirmed Monkeypox Cases

Most people with monkeypox virus have a self-limiting disease course without treatment. [Tecovirimat](#) (also known as TPOXX, ST-246) is an antiviral medication that is approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for the treatment of smallpox in adults and children and may be effective for the treatment of severe monkeypox virus.

Individuals who test positive for monkeypox virus AND have severe disease (e.g. hospitalized), **OR** are at risk for severe disease **OR** have severe uncontrolled pain **MAY** be eligible for TPOXX treatment. A limited number of treatment courses are available following consultation with public health. Providers can call **602-506-3747** to discuss treatment for patients who test positive for monkeypox virus and meet the criteria above.

For additional information, please see:

- [Maricopa County Department of Public Health Monkeypox Information](#)
- [Monkeypox Clinical Recognition](#)
- [Preparation and Collection of Specimens for Monkeypox](#)
- [CDC Infection Prevention and Control of Monkeypox in Healthcare Settings](#)
- [CDC Updated Visual Examples of Monkeypox Rash Graphics](#)
- [CDC Interim Clinical Guidance for the Treatment of Monkeypox](#)

Thank you for your ongoing partnership.
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