



# Durham Region Health Department FAX about...

For Health Care Professionals



# Monitoring for Monkeypox

Public health agencies around the globe are reporting confirmed cases of monkeypox. Authorities in Quebec are currently investigating several potential cases. At this time Ontario has no confirmed cases.

Monkeypox is a viral illness endemic to parts of Central and West Africa. It is spread to people through direct contact with the bodily fluids or lesions of infected animals or people, via respiratory droplets from an infected person, or from mother to fetus. The incubation period of monkeypox is usually between 6-13 days but can range from 5 to 21 days. **Symptoms include fever, headache, swollen lymph nodes, and lethargy, followed by the development of a rash.** A person is considered infectious five days prior to rash onset and until lesions have crusted.

There are two clades (strains) of monkeypox: the Central African clade and the West African clade. Human infections with the Central African clade are typically more severe than infections with the West African clade.

There is no specific treatment for monkeypox virus infection, although antivirals developed for use against smallpox and post-exposure vaccination with the smallpox vaccine may help. Prior vaccination against smallpox may provide cross-protection.

## Action Requested

**Clinicians are advised to be vigilant and to consider monkeypox in their differential diagnosis** of patients presenting with unusual rash, plus other clinical signs consistent with monkeypox (e.g. fever, headache, and/or lymphadenopathy).

## Testing

Prior to collecting specimens, please contact the Public Health Ontario Laboratory (PHOL) at 1-877-604-4567 for further information about the collection and submission of samples. Further information about testing can be found on the [PHOL website](#) (or search for “poxvirus” on the main PHOL website).

May 20, 2022

905-668-2020 or 1-800-841-2729 | [durham.ca/health](https://durham.ca/health)

If you require this information in an accessible format, contact 1-800-841-2729.

