



**WHITE PLAINS PUBLIC SCHOOLS
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Dear White Plains City School District Community,

In the last few months New York State has seen new cases of Monkeypox, which is a contagious disease. Although it is rare in school aged children, there has been increased cases in New York State and a growing concern in our community. White Plains School District is committed to sharing information and will continue to work with the CDC and NYSDOH. Below are some frequently asked questions and general information for your reference.

What is monkeypox?

Monkeypox is a disease caused by a virus in the Poxvirus family similar to smallpox. Symptoms from monkeypox are usually less severe than smallpox. **Monkeypox disease is rare in children under 18 years of age.** Infections with monkeypox are rarely fatal, but symptoms can be painful and uncomfortable. Secondary skin infections can cause scarring and complications, as well.

What are the signs and symptoms of monkeypox?

Monkeypox is an infectious disease that can cause fever, swollen lymph nodes, and/or a rash. Monkeypox is spread through close contact, including prolonged face-to-face contact and skin-to-skin contact. It is contagious from the time symptoms begin until the rash has healed (new skin has formed). This can take 2-4 weeks.

Monkeypox symptoms usually start within three weeks of exposure to the virus, and may include:

- Flu-like symptoms (fever, headache, muscle aches, swollen lymph nodes).
- Followed by a rash 1-4 days later. The rash usually begins around the mouth/face, then spreads to the hands/feet/arms/legs/trunk. Some individuals only develop a rash on or near the personal private areas.
- The rash changes from small, flat red/dark spots to tiny blisters (vesicles) and then to larger, pus-filled blisters or pustules. The rash can take several weeks to heal.
- A person is contagious from the time their symptoms begin until the rash is completely healed, and new skin has formed. This can take 2-4 weeks.
- If you have symptoms of monkeypox, contact your healthcare provider immediately.
- Your healthcare provider can test for monkeypox, if indicated.

How is monkeypox spread?

Monkeypox [spreads in different ways](#). The virus can spread from person-to-person through:

- Direct contact with the infectious rash or scabs.
- Respiratory droplets during prolonged face-to-face contact (>3 hours) or during intimate physical contact.
- Touching cloth items such as clothing, sheets, or towels that have been used by someone with monkeypox.
- Sharing drinks, utensils, and toothbrushes.

Unlike COVID-19, monkeypox does not spread by persons without symptoms or by casual contact.

Who is at risk for monkeypox?

- It is important to note that anyone can get monkeypox if they have very close contact with someone who is infected.
- Monkeypox spreads in close-knit social groups. A person's individual risk is dependent on their individual social engagements.
- An individual's level of risk increases if they engage in social activities with skin-to-skin contact.

What steps can I take to prevent getting monkeypox?

- Wash your hands often with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid close contact with, and handling linens and/or items, of people with monkeypox.
- Avoid engagements where there is direct, personal, skin-to-skin contact.

As you know, there are increasing cases of monkeypox identified in the United States. Anyone in close contact with a person with monkeypox may contract the illness and should take steps to protect themselves.

What if I have been exposed to someone with monkeypox?

If you had a known high-risk exposure to someone with monkeypox but **do not** have any symptoms:

- Monitor for symptoms for 21 days and contact your healthcare provider.
- Consider vaccination

If you had a known, or possible, exposure and have **symptoms or have a rash**:

- Your healthcare provider can test for monkeypox, if indicated.

Monkeypox Vaccine Clinics on Mondays and Wednesdays at 134 Court Street, White Plains.

Appointments are required.

People at higher risk for monkeypox infection may consider vaccination with the two-dose JYNNEOS vaccine. In accordance with CDC guidance, this includes those who:

- Had contact with someone who had a rash that looks like monkeypox or with someone who was diagnosed with confirmed or probable monkeypox
- Had skin-to-skin contact with someone in a social network experiencing monkeypox activity;
- Traveled outside the United States to a country with confirmed cases of monkeypox or where monkeypox activity has been ongoing

If you meet the CDC guidance outlined above, you are eligible to register for a

- [1st dose monkeypox vaccination](#)
- [2nd dose monkeypox vaccination](#)

What do I do if I am diagnosed with monkeypox?

Follow the [instructions from the CDC](#) and your medical provider. The White Plains School District expects that individuals who test positive for monkeypox will comply with New York State DOH communications and recommendations, including isolation and contact tracing. Individuals will need to [isolate](#) until they are no longer contagious and all scabs/lesions have resolved and new skin has grown (which can take 2-4 weeks). [Detailed isolation and cleaning instructions for monkeypox](#) can be found on the CDC website.

Employees should reach out to their HR liaison for questions about leave or returning to work.

Is there treatment for monkeypox?

Most people with monkeypox recover fully within 2 to 4 weeks without the need for medical treatment. Antivirals, such as tecovirimat (TPOXX), may be recommended for [people who are more likely to get severely ill](#), like patients with weakened immune systems. TPOXX is currently only available through the Strategic National Stockpile.