

South West Infection Prevention & Control (IPAC) Hub

- Huron Perth & Area Ontario Health Team
- Middlesex-London Health Unit
- Southwestern Public Health

South West IPAC Hub Update

Aug 02, 2022

IPAC Hub July Newsletter

Monkeypox

Monkeypox is a rare disease caused by the monkeypox virus related to smallpox. Monkeypox has a similar but less severe clinical presentation and is less contagious than smallpox. Monkeypox is mostly seen in Central and West African countries, with sporadic cases occurring in travelers, however, most recently, monkeypox has occurred in countries outside of Central and West African countries, including Canada.

Monkeypox is spread primarily through direct contact with infectious sores, scabs, or body fluids. This includes intimate contact during sex, kissing, cuddling, and touching parts of the body with sores. It can also be spread through respiratory secretions during prolonged, face-to-face contact.

Anyone who has had close, prolonged contact with someone who is infected with monkeypox or who have touched contaminated objects/materials (clothing, bedding, towels, eating utensil, and dishes)

are at risk of becoming infected.

There is no specific treatment for monkeypox, however, vaccination for smallpox may provide some protection from infection with smallpox or help reduce the severity of symptoms. In some cases, the vaccine for smallpox can be given to close contacts after exposure to prevent developing the infection.

Symptoms of monkeypox include fever, chills, headache, muscle pain, exhaustion, and a rash developing within 1-3 days after the fever starts. The rash often starts on the face or extremities however it can affect other parts of the body, such as the hands, feet, mouth, and genitals. The rash usually lasts between 14 and 28 days and changes through different stages before finally forming a scab which later falls off.

Images of individual monkeypox lesions



Source: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/monkeypox>

Following basic public health measures can help prevent you from getting or spreading the infection. This includes:

- staying home when sick or if you have exposed skin sores that may be caused by monkeypox
- practicing respiratory etiquette, including covering coughs and sneezes, and wearing a face mask
- hand hygiene
- practicing safer sex
- keep sores and wounds covered

COVID Booster Dose Eligibility

As of July 13, 2022, the Ministry of Health expanded the eligibility for the second booster dose (fourth dose) to all Ontarians aged 18+ in order to provide an extra layer of protection against COVID-19 infection.

The following high-risk individuals should get their second booster dose as soon as possible:

- Individuals aged 60 and over;
- First Nation, Inuit, and Métis individuals and their non-Indigenous household members aged 18 and over;
- Residents of a long-term care home, retirement home, or Elder Care Lodge and older adults living in other congregate settings that provide assisted-living and health services; and
- Individuals who are moderate to severely immunocompromised.

Also, the Ontario government will continue to provide free rapid antigen tests to the general public through existing channels like grocery stores and pharmacies, as well as to workplaces, schools, hospitals, long-term care homes, retirement homes, and other congregate settings until December 31, 2022.

Surveillance

According to [Best Practices for Infection Prevention and Control Programs in Ontario, May, 2012](#), “A well-designed surveillance program is essential for performing all of the other necessary activities of the IPAC program.” Surveillance includes the collection of data about infections that occur in the long-term care home or other congregate living settings. To determine if there is an outbreak or infections that are occurring above the normal range, a baseline number of infections should be determined. This can be accomplished by reviewing microbiological lab results for residents or through monitoring of illnesses in participants in a congregate living setting for a set period of time. Once baseline numbers are known, it is possible to take action (ie. Outbreak declaration) when infections are above baseline, to prevent the spread of infections and illness.

For more information about surveillance programs, please contact the Southwest IPAC Hub.

South West IPAC Hub

Contact your Core IPAC Hub

ipachub@swpublichealth.ca

Or contact your local satellite IPAC hub at:

Middlesex London Health Unit:

OFT@mlhu.on.ca



Southwestern Public Health:

ipachub@swpublichealth.ca



Huron Perth and Area Ontario Health Team:

ipachub@hpaoh.t.ca



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