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## **U.S. COUNCIL FOR ATHLETES' HEALTH: MONKEY POX FAQ FOR SPORTS**

### **What is monkeypox?**

- Monkeypox is a rare, but emerging, disease caused by infection with the monkeypox virus. Monkeypox virus is part of the same family of viruses that causes smallpox.

### **How is it spread?**

- Currently, the Centers for Disease Control state the risk of contracting monkeypox in the U.S. is "believed to be low," but anyone who comes into close contact with someone carrying the disease is at risk of infection.
- Human-to-human transmission can result from close contact with skin lesions, respiratory secretions (coughing/sneezing) of an infected person or recently contaminated objects. Transmission usually requires prolonged face-to-face or skin to skin contact. So far, it has predominately been spread by sexual relations, but any occasion with close skin to skin contact (contact sports such as wrestling) may lead to disease spread.
- It may also be possible for it to spread through contact with an infected person's body fluids such as blood, saliva, and semen. We don't know yet if an infected person with no symptoms can spread the virus to others.
- It can take 5 to 21 days from initial exposure for symptoms to start.

### **What are the symptoms?**

- Monkeypox symptoms are similar to smallpox symptoms, but milder, and monkeypox is rarely fatal. Early in the infection (the invasion period lasting 0-5 days) symptoms include fever, intense headache, swollen lymph nodes, muscle and body aches, and profound fatigue. The rash usually begins 1-3 days after the fever and is more concentrated on the face and the extremities. 95% of cases affect the face and 75% affect the palms of hands and soles of feet, and 70% of cases affect the mouth/throat.
- The rash begins as flat spots that turn into bumps, which then fill with fluid. Some people develop spots that look like pimples or blisters before having any other symptoms. The bumps crust and fall off as they heal. The rash can be painful or itchy. Usually, people feel better within 2 to 4 weeks.

### **How is it diagnosed?**

- The diagnosis starts with clinical recognition of the symptoms and rash as well as potential exposure. Special viral culture tests are required to confirm the diagnosis.

### **How is it treated?**

- A person with monkeypox needs to stay home and keep away from other household members to avoid infecting anyone else. They may be told to take over-the-counter medicines for fever, pain, or itching. As with other infections, it is important to stay well hydrated. Doctors can prescribe an antiviral medicine for people who are at high risk for getting very sick from monkeypox.

### **If infected or exposed, must I quarantine or isolate?**

- Current data suggest people can spread monkeypox from the time symptoms start until all symptoms have resolved, including full healing of the rash with formation of a fresh layer of skin. Ideally, people with monkeypox will isolate for the duration of illness, which typically lasts two to four weeks.
- If you have been exposed to someone with monkey pox, watch for symptoms for 21 days after you've been exposed. If you develop symptoms of monkeypox infection, isolate immediately and contact your local public health authority or health care provider. It is important to continue to practice hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette and safe sex behaviors during your self-monitoring period.

### **How can it be prevented?**

- Staying home and limiting contact with others if you have fever, headache, body/muscle aches or extreme fatigue or if you have developed fever and then a rash. Avoid close physical contact with people who may have been exposed. Avoid sharing bedding, clothing, or towels with people. Maintain good hygiene, hand washing, social distancing, consider masking in close indoor settings and cleanse/disinfect high touch surfaces. Further, educating athletes, coaches, medical personnel about monkey pox will help with prevention. Lastly, a vaccine is currently available, for those that are in high infection regions of the country or participate in high-risk sports (wrestling) may want to consider vaccination if/when it is available.

### **What does this mean for sports?**

- Currently, we are monitoring the disease prevalence and spread in communities. At this time, we are not recommending any widespread changes to sports. However, it is still important for athletes to stay home if they show signs of infection (fever, headache, fatigue, muscle/body aches). Further hand washing, cleaning high use surfaces (wrestling mats, taping/exam tables) and use of individual equipment (swim kick boards, towels, etc.) is still recommended for sports.