

**FACT SHEET****Monkeypox in Animals: The Basics for People Who Have Contact with Animals****Background**

In early June 2003, a rare disease called monkeypox was reported among several people for the first time in the United States. Monkeypox normally occurs among animals and people in central and western Africa. In people, the illness causes a rash like smallpox.

Most people who got monkeypox as part of this outbreak became sick after touching or handling sick pet prairie dogs. Those prairie dogs were infected by other animals that were sent from Africa to the United States on April 9 to be sold as pets. The infected animals included Gambian giant pouched rats, rope squirrels, dormice, and other small mammals. You can see photos of these animals at www.cdc.gov/ncidod/monkeypox/animals.htm. Most people who got monkeypox in the United States did not get very sick, but the disease can be deadly. This outbreak is a threat to the public's health.

This fact sheet has important information and instructions about monkeypox for people who have contact with animals. This includes pet shop owners and workers, animal handlers, animal control officers, animal rescuers, and pet owners.

1) Follow Legal Restrictions on Certain Animals

Because of the dangers of these animals to the public, CDC and FDA put a legal order into place on June 11 to stop the import of all rodents from Africa into the United States. This order also stops, among other things, the movement, sale, or release into the wild of prairie dogs and six types of African rodents within the United States. On November 4, 2003, the order was replaced by an interim final rule which continues to stop the import of all rodents from Africa and among other things, the movement, sale, or release into the wild of prairie dogs and six types of African rodents within the United States. People who do not follow this legal rule are breaking the law. The legal rule can be found online at edocket.access.gpo.gov/2003/03-27557.htm

2) Watch for Symptoms of Monkeypox in Animals

It is not known what types of animals might catch monkeypox. Any mammal, including cats, dogs, and pocket pets such as hamsters and gerbils, can get monkeypox if they have been around another animal or person that is sick. Some animals with monkeypox have died and others have gotten better.

The symptoms that have been seen in animals during this outbreak include:

- Cough
- Pus from the eyes (appears cloudy or crusty) or the nose
- Swollen lymph nodes in the arms or legs
- Bumpy or blister-like rash

Animals that have monkeypox also may just seem to be very tired and may not eat or drink.

November 5, 2003

Page 1 of 4

Monkeypox in Animals: The Basics for People Who Have Contact with Animals

(continued from previous page)

3) If You See Signs of Monkeypox, Call Your Health Department

If an animal around you shows signs of monkeypox, call your state or local health department right away. The health department may want to come get the animal or they may tell you take the animal to an animal doctor (vet). Follow the health department's instructions exactly.

4) Follow Instructions Carefully

If you touch a sick animal, you could get monkeypox. Animals that are sick should be cared for by trained staff who are using the proper precautions. If your health department asks you to take the sick animal to a vet, follow the instructions below.

- Call the vet clinic and let them know you have an animal that may have monkeypox. They can then take steps to protect themselves and other animals.
- If the clinic agrees to see the animal, the staff there need to arrange for the animal to be brought into the clinic safely and quickly.
- Get ready to handle the animal for the trip to the clinic:
 - ✓ Wear gloves and protective clothing to keep from getting scratched. This includes heavy rubber gloves and a long sleeve shirt. This will also help keep you from touching the monkeypox blisters and the animal's body fluids.
 - ✓ If you think the animal might try to bite, wear the heaviest gloves you have. These can be leather garden gloves or household utility gloves.
 - ✓ Put the animal in a cage or box for transport. Be sure the animal has enough air.
 - ✓ Limit the number of people you take with you. It's best to leave children with someone else if you can.
- If the vet thinks the animal has monkeypox, you need to clean and disinfect the area of the vehicle where the animal was kept (see Cleaning section).
- Wash and dry clothing and other washable materials used to handle the animal.
- Wash your hands carefully with soap and water and after you clean.

Anyone who has a sick animal needs to watch for symptoms of human illness that could be monkeypox. If you think someone is ill from contact with a sick animal, call your doctor or health department immediately. For more information on symptoms in people, see

www.cdc.gov/ncidod/monkeypox/casedefinition.htm.

5) Cleaning and Disinfecting

If a sick animal has been removed from your home or place of business, contact your state or local health department (www.cdc.gov/other.htm#states) for advice about cleaning. If they don't have special instructions, follow the steps below.

- Use standard household detergents first to clean surfaces.
- Next, clean with a disinfectant, like a solution of ¼ cup bleach to 1 gallon of water.

Some cleaning tips to remember:

<i>Washable toys, cages, food containers, and other objects</i>	Clean and disinfect by hand or in a dishwasher
<i>Animal bedding, pillows, or other washable materials</i>	Wash in a household washing machine or throw away after you disinfect
<i>Wood chips and other objects that need to be tossed</i>	Completely soak with a disinfectant, put the materials in a plastic bag, and then place them in a covered trashcan with other household trash

Monkeypox in Animals: The Basics for People Who Have Contact with Animals

(continued from previous page)

<i>Heavy gloves</i>	If you don't want to throw away your heavy gloves, you can wash as clothing or soak in a disinfectant solution
---------------------	--

6) Quarantine Exposed Animals

Keep animals that have been exposed to monkeypox away from other animals and people, even if they are not sick. This is called quarantine. Most animals that have had contact with another animal known to have monkeypox must be placed under quarantine for 6 weeks from the date they were last exposed. Your health department may tell you about this exposure, or you may know of such contact yourself. Contact includes 1) living in the same house, 2) coming from the same pet store or other pet facility, or 3) being bought or traded at an animal swap meet.

7) Follow Quarantine Instructions Carefully

If you believe you have or know of an animal that has been exposed to monkeypox, call your local or state health department (www.cdc.gov/other.htm#states) right away and follow these instructions for dealing with a quarantined animal:

- Put the exposed animal (in a cage, if you can) in a room with a closed door. Keep it away from all other animals for 6 weeks from the date of exposure or purchase. Be sure the animal has enough air and light.
- Have one person feed the animal, give it water, and clean its waste.
- Limit the time spent with the animal. After any contact with the animal, wash hands well with soap and water.
- Protective clothing is not needed when handling quarantined animals that have no symptoms.
- Watch for signs of monkeypox illness in the quarantined animal or in the person taking care of the animal.
- If the animal seems sick, call your local or state health department (www.cdc.gov/other.htm#states) right away and follow instructions.
- If quarantined animals are kept in a store (in a separate room, for example), keep them away from people with HIV, cancer, or other diseases that affect the immune system; pregnant women; and people who have had transplants or who are undergoing treatments such as chemotherapy.

If you can't care for or keep an animal that has been exposed to monkeypox, call your state or local health department for advice. They may tell you to take animal to a vet or other official. Or they may recommend humane euthanasia of the animal (i.e., putting it to sleep). In some cases, the health department may come pick up the animal.

8) Watch Yourself for Signs of Monkeypox

If you have been in contact with or have cared for a sick or quarantined animal, watch yourself for signs of monkeypox. If you get a fever, rash, or other signs of illness, call your health care provider and your local or state health department (www.cdc.gov/other.htm#states) right away. They will provide medical care and instructions.

Monkeypox in Animals: The Basics for People Who Have Contact with Animals

(continued from previous page)

9) What You Should NOT Do

- Do **not** take a sick animal to a vet without calling first to let them know that the animal has been exposed to monkeypox.
- Do **not** leave a sick animal at a shelter or release it into the wild. The animal cannot survive and, if infected, it could spread monkeypox to animals in the wild.
- If the animal dies, call your state or local health department to find out what to do with the body. Do **not** throw the animal's body away in household trash or at a dump or landfill. Do **not** bury the animal's body in your yard. Doing this could spread the disease if the animal was infected.

10) Care of Animals by People Infected with Monkeypox

- Animals that have had contact with infected people are considered exposed to monkeypox. The animals must then be put in quarantine.
- We do not know if people with monkeypox can spread the disease to animals. Therefore, they should limit their contact with animals such as cats, dogs, hamsters, gerbils.
- Pets should not be allowed to share an ill owner's bed. Also, the owner's clothing and other materials that may have touched skin lesions can spread monkeypox.
- Dressings and bandages should be put in a secure container. Keep them away from animals.
- People with monkeypox should practice good general hygiene (including hand washing). They may choose to limit contact with animals until their doctor says it's safe to resume normal activities. For further information about infection control practices in this setting, see CDC's interim guidance at www.cdc.gov/ncidod/monkeypox/infectioncontrol.htm.

For More Information

For more information, call your state or local health department or the CDC Emergency Operations Center, 770-488-7100.

General information about pets and diseases is available at CDC's Healthy Pets, Healthy People Web site (www.cdc.gov/ncidod/diseases/pets/index.htm).

For more information, visit www.cdc.gov/ncidod/monkeypox or call the CDC public response hotline at (888) 246-2675 (English), (888) 246-2857 (Español), or (866) 874-2646 (TTY)

November 5, 2003

Page 4 of 4