

As of June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023

## Mpox (Monkeypox)

Mpox (Monkeypox) is an acute, rash disease that causes fever, headache, and lymphadenopathy due to infection with the Mpox virus. It is classified as one of the Category IV Infectious Disease under the Infectious Diseases Control Law. The name of Mpox was changed from monkeypox in the Infectious Diseases Control Law on May 26, 2023.

After the discovery of human cases in 1970, the disease has been endemic from Central Africa to West Africa. Since May 2022, there have been a series of reports in Europe and North America. But as of March 2023, the overall number of reported cases is on a downward trend.

In Japan, no cases had been reported since 2003, when National Epidemiological Surveillance of Infectious Diseases began compiling data. However, the first case was reported on July 25, 2022. Thereafter, sporadic outbreaks have been reported, and the number of reported cases has been increasing since the beginning of 2023.

Okinawa Prefecture reported its first case on April 7, 2023.

## Symptoms.

- The incubation period is usually 6-13 days (maximum 5-21 days), with fever, headache, lymphadenopathy, and rashes 1-3 days after the onset of fever.
- In most cases, the disease resolves spontaneously, but it can become severe in children, depending on their health status and its complications.

## Route of infection

- Bite or contact with an infected animal.
- Contact with lesions, body fluids, or blood of the patient (including sexual contact).
- Prolonged exposure to droplets in close, face-to-face contact with the patient
- Contact with bedding or other items used by the patient.

## Treatment and Prevention

- Treatment is symptomatic.
- Smallpox vaccine is considered effective as a preventive method, but in Japan, smallpox vaccination for children was discontinued in 1976. Smallpox was declared eradicated by WHO in 1980. Wearing a mask, cough etiquette, and hand hygiene are important.

## Q&A on Monkey Pox

[To all residents of the prefecture]

Q. What should I do if I see symptoms that are suspicious of monkeypox?

A. Please consult with the nearest public health center. We will confirm the symptoms, etc., and guide you to a medical institution if necessary.

Contact information for each public health center

Public Health Center	Phone Number
Health Promotion Team, North Health Center (Hokubu Hokenjo)	0980-52-5219
Health Promotion Team, Central Health Center (Chubu Hokenjo)	098-938-9701
Health Promotion Team, Southern Health Center (Nanbu Hokenjo)	098-889-6591
General Affairs Division, Naha Health Center Health (Naha-shi Hokenjo)	098-853-7972
Health Promotion Team, Miyako Health Center (Miyako Hokenjo)	0980-73-5074
Health Promotion Team, Yaeyama Health Center (Yaeyama Hokenjo)	0980-82-4891

\* The consultation service is available during weekday office hours.

Q. What should I do if I need to go to a medical institution?

A. Avoid public transportation. It is preferable to use a private car or other means of transportation that can avoid contact with other people as much as possible. If you have no choice but to use public transportation, wear a mask, and if you have skin lesions, cover them with clothing such as long sleeves or long slacks (pants), or gauze. In such cases, it is advisable to avoid contact with others, for example, by choosing a relatively empty time and space.

Q. How is the monkeypox test performed?

A. If a doctor at the medical institution you visit suspects monkeypox, a specimen is collected and tested at the Prefectural Institute of Public Health and Environment. The Institute of Public Health and Environment performs a PCR test (genetic testing) to diagnose the monkeypox virus.

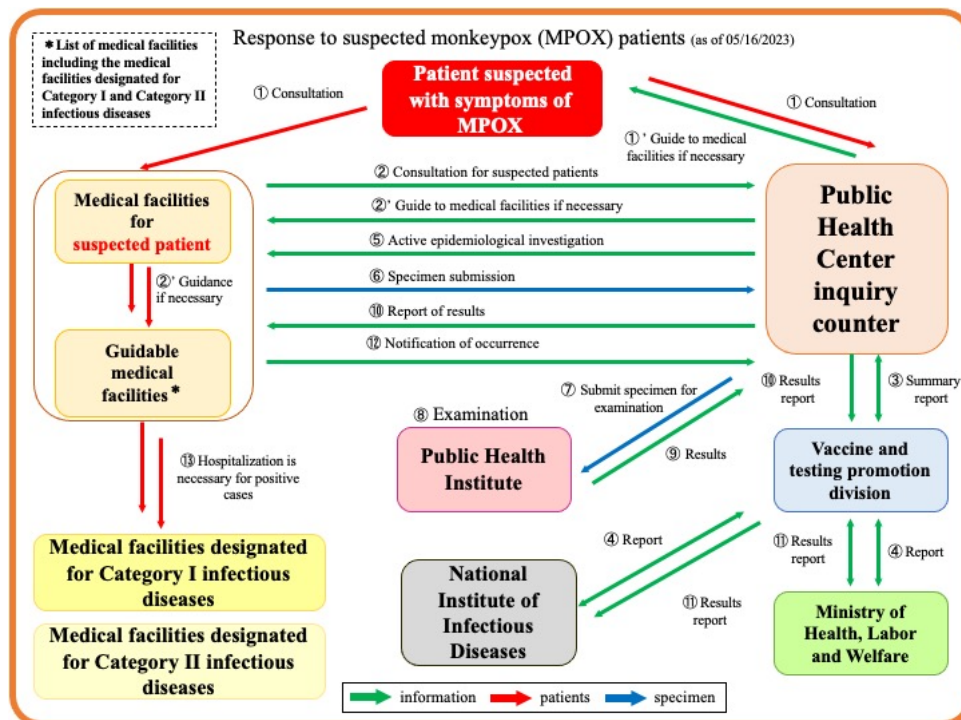
Q. What kind of specimen is needed for testing?

A. Skin lesions. Depending on the stage of the skin lesion, it can be blisters or crusts (so-called "scabs").

A. Throat swab may also be used.

Q. What to do in the case of a suspected monkeypox outbreak in the prefecture?

A. When a patient suspected of having monkeypox occurs in the prefecture, the response is as follows.



The above is a translation of an excerpt from the monkeypox information, posted on the Okinawa Prefecture website (<https://www.pref.okinawa.lg.jp/site/hoken/vaccine/yobou/sarutou.html>) as of July 1, 2023.

Translation: FY2023 Health and Labor Sciences Research Grants Research on HIV/AIDS "Research contributing to the establishment of a system for HIV testing and medical care provision for international migrants in Japan" Principal investigator: Tsutomu Kitajima (Faculty of Social Sciences, Kyorin University)