

K-12 School Recommendations for Monkeypox (MPX)

Contra Costa Health works closely with K-12 school partners to keep students, staff, and their families safe and healthy. Contra Costa Health will continue working with them during this monkeypox (MPX) outbreak.

Although there have been recent cases in Contra Costa and in California, MPX remains rare and the risk of exposure at school is low. Schools should be aware of current guidance and prepare for the possibility of a case at school.

MPX can cause flu-like symptoms (fever, headache, feeling more tired than usual, swollen lymph nodes (“glands”) and a **distinctive rash with sores that are usually painful**. A person with MPX infection is contagious when symptoms begin and until the sores are completely healed.

Anyone can get MPX but not everyone is at equal risk. MPX spreads through close, personal, usually skin-to-skin contact. Spread through casual contact is less likely. Unlike COVID, the MPX virus does not spread through the air over long distances. During the current outbreak, most cases have been associated with sexual contact, particularly among LGBTQ men who recently have had sex with multiple partners. Schools may want to share prevention information with older students who are sexually active, including this [risk chart](#). More communication materials and educational information are available at cchealth.org/mpx or in our online [MPX communications toolkit](#).

Common practices already in place to prevent more common causes of illness will also help prevent MPX.

- **Contra Costa County School Districts and Schools**
 - **Routinely clean** commonly touched items using appropriate products
 - **Report** communicable diseases, including MPX, among students and staff to the public health department
 - **Coordinate** with public health and take steps to protect others from illness

- **Contra Costa Public Health**
 - **Inform** districts and schools of current guidance and recommendations to prevent others from becoming ill
 - **Vaccinate** priority groups to protect those at high-risk and prevent new MPX cases in our community
 - **Coordinate** with district/school when a MPX case has been identified at a school



- **Parents, Students, and Staff:**

- **Self-screen** for symptoms (fever, rash, etc.) daily and stay home when not feeling well.
- **Report** illness to school and check with doctor if symptoms are not improving.
- **Get vaccinated** for diseases that can cause fever, rash, and flu-like symptoms including: measles, chickenpox, flu, and COVID. MPX vaccine is only recommended for certain community members at the greatest risk of exposure at this time. Individuals at higher risk to MPX can speak with their healthcare provider about MPX vaccine or visit cchealth.org/mpx for information on how to schedule a vaccine appointment.

August 24, 2022

