

Government of Pakistan
Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination
03rd Floor, Kohsar Building, Pak Secretariat

F.No.1-4/2024-Mpox/DDC

Islamabad, the 17th September, 2024

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR MPOX PREVENTION FOR TRAVELERS TO PAKISTAN

1. Purpose:-

To identify the Mpox cases among inbound travelers to Pakistan and to control the further transmission in the community.

2. Scope

These SOPs apply to Pakistani citizens, migrant workers, and other international travelers to Pakistan travelling from Mpox endemic countries. It also applies to embassies, consulates, and missions abroad responsible for disseminating health information to travelers.

3. Introduction:

- Mpox, previously known as monkeypox, is a viral zoonotic illness caused by the monkeypox virus.
- During first four days after the completion of incubation period disease starts with febrile stage with generalized symptoms including fever, headache, muscle aches, back pain, lethargy and swollen lymph nodes followed by the presentation of characteristic symptoms starts with development of skin rash or mucosal lesions (apparent on upper and lower extremities, face and trunk of the body. These may include single or multiple oral, conjunctival, urethral, penile, vaginal or ano-rectal lesions) and can last 2–4 weeks

4. Route of Transmission:

- Mpox spreads from person to person mainly through close contact with someone who has Mpox, including members of a household. Close contact includes skin-to-skin (such as touching or sex) and mouth-to-mouth or mouth-to-skin contact (such as kissing), and it can also include being face-to-face with someone who has Mpox (such as talking or breathing close to one another, which can generate infectious respiratory particles).
- People with multiple sexual partners are at higher risk of acquiring Mpox.



- People can also contract Mpox from contaminated objects such as clothing or linen, through needle injuries in health care, or in community settings.
-

5. Case Definition-Suspected (As per WHO & National Guidelines):

- A person who is a contact of a probable or confirmed Mpox case in the 21 days before the onset of signs or symptoms,
- and who presents with any of the following: acute onset of fever (>38.5°C), headache, myalgia (muscle pain/body aches), back pain, profound weakness, or fatigue;

OR

- A person presenting with an unexplained acute skin rash, mucosal lesions or lymphadenopathy (swollen lymph nodes). The skin rash may include single or multiple lesions in the ano-genital region or elsewhere on the body.
- Mucosal lesions may include single or multiple oral, conjunctival, urethral, penile, vaginal, or anorectal lesions.
- Ano-rectal lesions can also manifest as ano-rectal inflammation (proctitis), pain and/or bleeding.

6. Know the Symptoms of Mpox

➤ Mpox typically presents with:

- Fever
- Headache
- Muscle aches
- Swollen lymph nodes
- A distinctive rash that may develop into macules and later fluid-filled lesions

➤ Symptoms usually appear 5-21 days after exposure.

7. General Guidelines for Travelers

➤ **Pre-Travel Health Information:**

- All travelers should be informed about the symptoms, modes of transmission, and prevention of Mpox.



- Travelers should avoid close contact with individuals showing Mpox symptoms (fever, rash, swollen lymph nodes).
- Avoid contact with wild animals, particularly rodents and monkeys, as they can be sources of Mpox infection.
- Adopt and maintain good hygiene practices, such as regular hand washing with soap or using alcohol-based hand sanitizers.

➤ **Personal Protection:**

- Avoid sharing personal items during travel to prevent Mpox transmission
-

8. Health Monitoring

- Monitor your health for any symptoms of Mpox for **21 days** after your return to Pakistan.
 - If you develop a fever, rash, or swollen lymph nodes, **self-isolate immediately** and contact your nearest healthcare provider.
 - Inform the Border health authorities at Airports about your recent travel history.
-

9. Procedures Upon Arrival at Points of Entry (PoE)

- **Health Screening:**
 - Upon arrival at PoEs (airports, land borders, seaports), travelers may be subject to **health screening** by health authorities, including:
 - Temperature checks.
 - Health questionnaires regarding recent symptoms or exposure to confirmed Mpox cases.
 - Travelers presenting symptoms consistent with Mpox will be referred to the designated healthcare facilities annexed for follow up and further evaluation.
 - **Isolation and Reporting:**
 - Symptomatic individuals will be immediately isolated and reported to designated local health facility
-

10. Contact Tracing and Surveillance

- **Information Sharing:**
 - Travelers must provide accurate contact information and travel history to assist with **contact tracing** if Mpox is detected.



- Encourage travelers to monitor their health for up to 21 days post-arrival and report any symptoms to District health authorities (list annexured)
 - **Case Management:**
 - If a traveler develops Mpox symptoms within 21 days after arrival, they should:
 - Self-isolate immediately.
 - Contact the local health authority or nearest healthcare facility.
 - Follow national guidelines for testing, isolation, and treatment.
 - The treatment units are designated in respective districts across Pakistan (List of designated facilities is annexured with these SOPs)
-

11. Contact Information

- Stay informed through **MONHSRC & NIH website** regarding the latest health updates on Mpox in Pakistan (updated guidelines for Mpox are available at website- www.nih.org.pk)

By adhering to these guidelines, we can collectively prevent the spread of Mpox and safeguard public health. Thank you for your cooperation.

Issued by:

Ministry of National Health Services Regulations & Coordination, Pakistan

