

Monkeypox

Agent: Monkeypox virus (genus *Orthopoxvirus*)

Mode of Transmission: From the bite of or direct contact with lesions or body fluids of an infected animal. Though less common, infection can be transmitted from person to person by respiratory droplets or by direct contact with body fluids of an infected person, or with virus-contaminated objects such as bedding.

Signs/Symptoms: Similar to smallpox, though more mild. Initial symptoms include fever, headache, backache, sore throat, cough and swollen lymph nodes. Three days after fever onset, a rash develops.

Prevention: Avoid contact with exotic or wild mammals that originate from areas where monkeypox has occurred.

Other Important Information: In 2003, a monkeypox outbreak was reported in the United States among persons exposed to native prairie dogs that had contact with imported African rodents.

Monkeypox became a reportable disease in Virginia in 2004. No cases of monkeypox have ever been reported in Virginia.