**Summary facts about mpox**

**The information in this document is based on the knowledge available on 15 August 2024.**

**What is mpox?**

* Mpox is a viral illness. The causative virus is a species of the genus Orthopoxvirus. Two different clades exist: clade I and clade II.
* Laboratory confirmation of mpox is undertaken by testing skin lesion material through Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR).
* In 2022/23 a global outbreak of mpox was caused by a viral strain known as clade IIb.

**How is mpox transmitted?**

* Mpox can be transmitted through physical contact with a human or animal that is infectious or with contaminated materials. The virus can be spread via:
* Direct contact with lesions or scabs of an infected person
* Bodily fluids (e.g., blood, saliva and semen)
* Sexual activity (including oral and skin-to-skin contact)
* Contaminated items (such as clothing, bedding, and sex toys)
* Respiratory particles (through close contact, including talking, breathing, coughing, or sneezing).
* Pregnant individuals can potentially transmit the virus to their baby.

**Is there an incubation period?**

The incubation period (time from infection to appearance of symptoms) is, on average, 7−14 days but can range from 5−21 days.

**What are the common symptoms?**

Symptoms can last for 14 to 28 days.

* Initial symptoms include fever, headache, muscle aches, backache, chills and exhaustion.
* Within 1-3 days of onset of disease, blister-like lesions develop on the face and extremities, including the palms of the hands and the soles of the feet. Lesions may also occur on other parts of the body.

**Are there vaccines available?**

Mpox is treated with supportive care. Vaccines and therapeutics developed for smallpox and approved for use in some countries can be used for mpox in some circumstances. Vaccination can help prevent infection for people at risk.

For more information, please visit the WHO website at this [link](https://www.who.int/health-topics/monkeypox#tab=tab_1).

FIP publications on pandemic preparedness, response and recovery are available [here](https://humanitarian.fip.org/pandemic-preparedness-publications/).