

MONKEYPOX-RELATED ORAL MANIFESTATIONS AND ITS PREVENTION

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Monkey pox is a rare viral disease that is primarily found in Central and West Africa. It is similar to human smallpox but generally milder in severity. The disease is transmitted to humans through contact with infected animals or through human-to-human transmission. While the primary symptoms of monkey pox include fever, headache, muscle aches, and a rash, it has also been associated with oral health issues.

Studies have shown that monkey pox can cause oral lesions and ulcers in some cases affecting the oral mucosa in 70% of cases as macules and vesicles; lips may also be affected. These oral lesions may appear as small, painful blisters on the tongue, gums, or inside the cheeks. In severe cases, the ulcers can become large and cause significant pain and discomfort.

Furthermore, the virus that causes monkey pox can also affect the salivary glands, leading to the development of painful swelling in the face and neck. This swelling can cause difficulty in opening

the mouth, swallowing, and speaking, leading to further oral health complications.

Preventing the spread of monkey pox requires strict adherence to infection control practices, such as isolating infected individuals and practicing proper hand hygiene. Vaccination is also an effective way to prevent monkey pox, particularly in individuals who are at high risk of exposure to the virus.

Oral health is an essential aspect of overall health and well-being, yet it is often overlooked or undervalued in Pakistan. As a result, many individuals suffer from a range of oral health problems, including tooth decay, gum disease, and oral cancer, while monkey pox is primarily a viral disease that affects the skin and respiratory system, it can also cause significant oral health complications. Maintaining good oral hygiene practices and seeking prompt medical attention if you develop any symptoms of the disease can help to minimize the risk of oral health complications and promote overall well-being.