

STATETIMES

SUNDAY

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Here’s how 2022 monkeypox outbreak is different from previous ones

Monkeypox cases are rising, with four confirmed cases in India. As per several reports, the union government is mulling over developing vaccines against this infectious disease which is caused by monkeypox virus, a member of the Orthopoxvirus genus in the family Poxviridae. Of the four monkeypox cases in the country, three are from Kerala and one from the national capital Delhi. Recently, the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared monkeypox a global health emergency. Worldwide 19,000 cases have been reported in 76 countries; the alarming fact which has caught the attention of health agencies and experts is that more than 18000 cases have been reported in those countries which have no history of monkeypox cases.

While tracking the cases and testing people is being focused on currently, the findings of a recent study has shed light on how this outbreak is a different one. The 2022 monkeypox outbreak is different from the previous outbreaks in terms of symptoms, a research study has found. The study published in the British Medical Journal (BMJ) claims that the symptoms found in this year's monkeypox cases are much different from those seen during the outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo in 2007-11 and Nigeria in 2017-2018.

As per the research study, rectal pain and penile swelling are commonly seen in patients in this outbreak. The study is based on 197 men- 196 of which identified themselves as gay, bisexual and having sex with other men- who were confirmed positive for monkeypox. In the current outbreak lesions of different sizes and shapes develop in the body in different stages. The lesions are typically red patches, and are filled with infectious fluid.

In connection to the new symptoms it has claimed, the study found that 56% of the lesions are found in the genitals and 42% in the perianal region. This is the first time lesions are found around the genital region. Prior to this, in all previous outbreaks the lesions were seen on other parts of the body like head, arms and legs.

During the 2007-2011 outbreak the lesions were mostly seen in the head and arms. During the previous monkeypox outbreak, which happened in Nigeria in 2017-2018 lesions were mostly distributed in the face, leg and trunk region of the body.

Monkeypox lesions

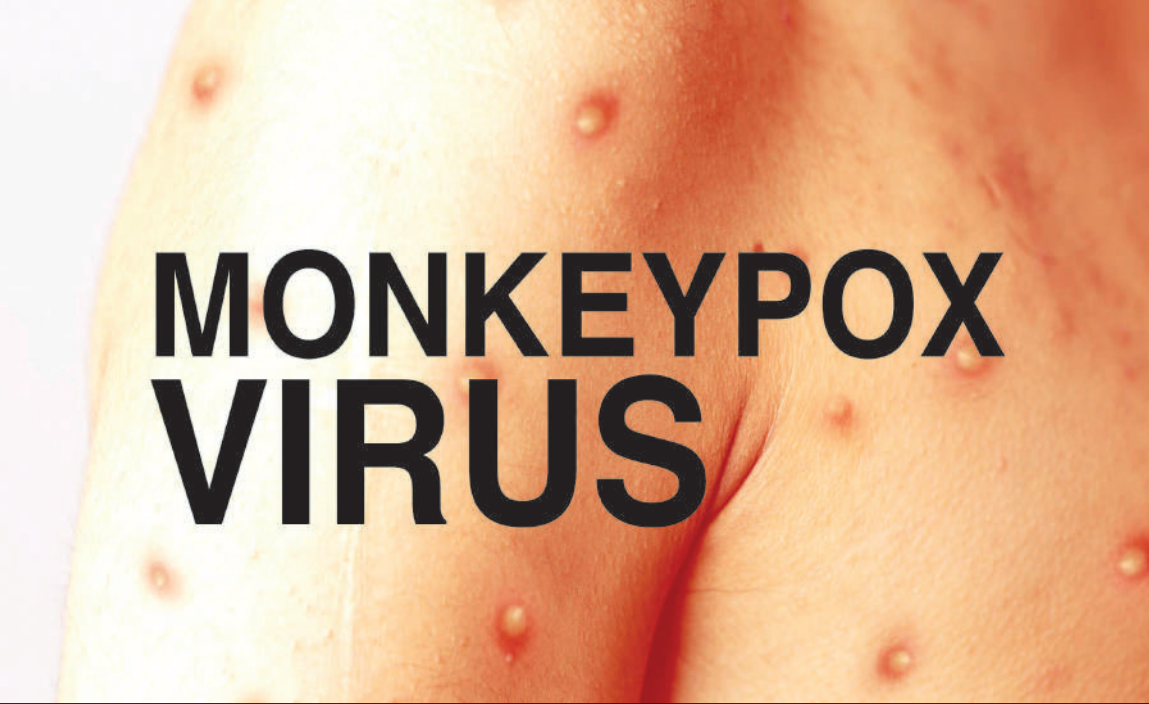
Lesions are a potential carrier of the monkeypox virus as body fluids and respiratory droplets. The lesions begin within 1–3 days of the appearance of fever.

The are different stages of lesions seen during monkeypox:

Macules: Lesions with a flat base

Papules: Slightly raised firm lesions

Vesicles: Lesions filled with clear fluid



Pustules: Lesions filled with yellowish fluid  
Crusts which dry and fall off  
Lesions can be seen in the face, palms of the hands and soles of the feet, oral mucous membranes, genitals, conjunctiva and cornea.  
**Asymptomatic cases pose a greater risk in transmission of monkeypox**  
Yet again, asymptomatic cases have posed a threat to human health. These cases were one of the many reasons why COVID pandemic took an ugly shape and so many people got infected with it.  
A disease is spotted through its symptoms. However, in asymptomatic cases the symptoms are not visible and the individual is fine health wise except that it carries the harmful virus in the body and has the same potential of spreading it around as a visibly infected person has. This is the reason why during the COVID pandemic, people were urged for testing even when they were not showing symptoms.

What does the study say about asymptomatic monkeypox cases?

The study found that except 26.5% of the cohort rest had no contact with anyone with confirmed monkeypox infection. This led to a possibility that either these individuals contracted the infection from someone who was asymptomatic or else had mild symptoms.

Young children at risk too

As per the latest data, 81 children under the age of 17 are reported as having been infected globally. Sharing this information at a press conference, Dr Rosamund Lewis, WHO Technical Lead added that in the majority of cases being among young men, the median age is 37 years. This draws attention towards the health of kids, especially those who are too young to report any symptom. This also brings to notice the education of young kids which was terribly hit during the COVID pandemic. Soon after the coronavirus led COVID was declared a global pandemic, taking the safety of the young population into consideration, governments all over the world shutdown educational institutions for close to 2 years.

Who else is at higher risk?

As per Dr Lewis, pregnant women, children, and immunocompromised persons are at higher risk for monkeypox.

There is a general idea that monkeypox is limited to those group of men who have sex with other men. However, this is not the case everywhere. “At the moment the outbreak is still concentrated in groups of men who have sex with men in some countries, but that is not the case everywhere,” Dr Lewis has said and has urged to not stigmatise any individual. “It is really important to appreciate also that stigma and discrimination can be very damaging and as dangerous as any virus itself,” she said.

**Symptoms of monkeypox**  
The classic symptoms of this infectious disease are fever, malaise, sweats, headache and swollen lymph nodes. An infected individual may also experience back pain, muscle pain and extreme lack of energy known as intense asthenia.

Being a self-limited disease, monkeypox symptoms last from 2 to 4 weeks. The severity of the infection is directly proportional to the extent of the viral exposure of the patient. Complications of monkeypox can include secondary infections, bronchopneumonia, sepsis, encephalitis, and infection of the cornea with ensuing loss of vision, the WHO has said. The fatality ratio of monkeypox ranges from zero to 11% with a higher ratio in children. As per the WHO, in recent times, the case fatality ratio has been around 3–6%.

Reflections on vision, mission and social commitment at JKPS Kunjwani

JK Public School (JKPS), Kunjwani is a CBSE affiliated, child-centric, value-driven, co-educational, Senior Secondary school, which enjoys the privilege of being the first CBSE school (direct affiliation) of Jammu. Stretched over a period of three decades, JKPS Kunjwani has emerged as a trendsetter, a model of excellence imparting 21st century holistic education to children on its rolls.

With the start of the session 2022-23, JKPS Kunjwani introduced 18 Clubs to groom students in variety Co-scholastic domains. Members of one of the Clubs, namely, Rajat Sharma Club of Jr. Journalists, interviewed the Principal Rajesh Rathore. Here are the excerpts of the meaningful transaction between the Jr. Journalists (JJ) and the Principal Rajesh Rathore (RR):

**JJ: What is your concept of an ideal JKian?**

**RR:** An ideal JKian is the one, who can always be spotted in a group, who has a distinctive flavor to his/her personality; has a lively interest in topical events and the world around; speaks and writes fluently in English and in at least one Indian language; has sufficient mastery over Mathematics and Science to understand and appreciate the scientific basis of modern civilization; is well informed and forms his/her own judgment; knows that being educated means abiding by certain standards of social behaviour; consistently makes efforts to master the use of his/her hands in some form of creative activity; has developed a love of reading for its own sake; plays games and has learnt that sportsmanship is a quality that must be cherished in day-today life; is not afraid to speak the truth without being offensive and has greatest regard for the rule of law and justice; is well mannered, sensitive and smart in his/her dress and deportment; cherishes the freedom of the mind, the humanity of the heart and the integrity of the individual; loves truth, beauty and goodness. In short, he/she is the epitome of what a cultured person aspires to be!

**JJ: Which features of the Institution do you admire the most?**

**RR:** JK Public School, Kunjwani is one of the finest Institutions in the UT of J&K. Its infrastructure is an architectural marvel. Classrooms are quite spacious, well lit, & it's equipped with well-designed smart boards & soft boards. Since JKPS emphasizes on the holistic grooming of every child, so we have hand-picked, talented teachers in our Art, craft, Music, Dance & Sports faculties.

Here merely being a scholar is not eye-catching but when a scholar plays guitar/drum/keyboard or shakes legs on a dance style, like, contemporary/ hiphop/ break/ Bhangra or sings a western song or presents a soulful rendition of a classical number or refutes the ideas of an opponent on a debating platform or makes the audience burst into peals of laughter during a comic skit or makes the audience sob during a poignant scene of a tragic play, that catches the fancy of the gallery of spectators. We keep raising the bar.

Though it's a day school, yet it is spread over a vast expanse giving ample space for all the sports activities, like, Football, Cricket, Volley-ball, Basketball, Mini Olympic-size Swimming pool, Skating rink, Cricket practice nets, Badminton court, Squash courts, Tennis court, and indoor games, like, Judo, Karate, Taekwondo, Gymnastics, Table Tennis (6 Nos.), Yoga, Carom, Chess etc.

JKPS is a wonderful school, wherein students are very decent, respectful and adorable. Teachers are quite knowledgeable, dedicated and committed. Their communication skills are very strong: whether it be written or verbal expression.

**JJ: How do you define an ideal teacher?**

**RR:** An ideal teacher has to be very knowledgeable, as it establishes the creden-



tials of a teacher in the classroom. Without a profound knowledge, no teacher can stand firmly on his/her feet. Strong communication skills are always a crucial hallmark for a teacher. Explanation of a theoretical concept stays with a child forever, if it is articulated well by a teacher irrespective of the subject or the class.

A teacher, being a classroom leader, has to be a practitioner, not merely a preacher. It's truly stated that values are to be caught, not to be taught. A teacher has to be competent, responsible, punctual, regular, well-organized, value-driven, well-attired, compassionate, forgiving and generous, if he/she wishes to see these qualities in his/her students. We can never expect students to exhibit those qualities or skills, which are found missing in their teachers.

**JJ: How do you encourage and motivate the staff?**

**RR:** I encourage my staff members by citing examples from my 27-year long gratifying teaching career. Words of appreciation and motivation fill the members of my staff with renewed vigour, passion and determination. When Titans clash on a common platform, then clinching one of the coveted top three positions brings laurels to the institution. Addition of every accomplishment makes our hearts heave high with pride and admiration. We felicitate the members of the staff on special occasions for their meritorious services and outstanding contributions. We organize capacity building programmes to empower our teachers on a regular basis.

**JJ: How do you recruit and maintain quality teachers?**

**RR:** The selection procedure for the recruitment of teachers has been quite stringent at JKPS Kunjwani. First of all, we shortlist candidates with brilliant academic background, schooling, strong communication skills in English along with suitable experience from renowned CBSE schools. Then we conduct a written test to evaluate the subject knowledge, written expression, relevance, reflection, hand writing and the presentation of the candidates. It is followed by a live demo, wherein a

subject expert thoroughly discusses the subject-related, class-specific concepts with the candidates. Then, we conduct an interview, wherein we discuss about the areas of interest of a candidate in Co-curricular and sports activities, teaching experience, professional training programmes, capacity building workshops and overall personality. Finally the short-listed candidates get the privilege of having an Interaction with the Chairman & the Director.

**JJ: What would be your ideal school environment and how would you encourage that kind of culture?**  
**RR:** An ideal school environment ensures a holistic growth profile to every student. School should not merely focus on a sound knowledge base, language acquisition, personality development and fitness & stamina, whereas it should also focus on developing finer sensibilities in every child. Today the hallmarks of our Institution are the development of environmental awareness, community outreach programmes, creative thinking, critical thinking, decision making and problem solving skills among students. JKPS Kunjwani has designed 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which will act as a lighthouse to set the direction of grooming from the entry stage to the passing out stage.

**JJ: Outline the role that parents should play in the school?**

**RR:** Parents' community is a great asset and one of the most important stakeholders for any institution. Parents must feel connected to the Institution and teachers.

Parents and teachers together can ensure holistic grooming of students. They must be constantly in touch with the subject teachers, Class Teacher, Coordinator and the Principal. A regular feedback rather a 360 degree feedback is the need of the hour. Decency, dignity and mutual respect can always nourish the bonding between parents and teachers. Good parent-teacher bonding always fetches desired results and forms life-long relationship.

Parents need to be very rational in today's world. They should not be credulous to whatever their wards narrate at home. They must clarify on certain inputs from their wards. Even school staff feels very happy and satisfied, when they receive a call from parents. Believe me, whenever I speak to parents over phone, it cements the bonding between us. They appreciate teachers for their meaningful contributions and share their observations/suggestions on how to take the Institution to greater heights.

**JJ: How do you visualize the future of your school?**

**RR:** With the strong backing of an enlightened Management team, educational think-tanks, extremely talented Staff, superbly supportive parents & immeasurably talented & promising students, JK Public School Kunjwani enjoys the reputation of being one of the finest institutions in the entire North India. It's committed to ensure that a competent, compassionate, creative, responsible global citizenry passes out from its magnificent portals every year. AMEN!

**JJ:** Thanks a lot sir for sparing your valuable time and for reflecting your vision and strategies to help students design their roadmaps to reach their dream destination. Your unique vision and passionate endeavours will certainly put the JKPS Kunjwani on a new trajectory. Wishing you the best of luck!

**RR:** Thanks a ton, my beloved students. This institution is reaching its pinnacle of glory due to your sincerity, dedication, commitment & focused approach. I wish you a very bright future. Good luck!

