



MONKEYPOX FAQs

BASICS

What is monkeypox?

Monkeypox is a rare disease caused by infection with the monkeypox virus. Monkeypox virus is part of the same family of viruses as variola virus, the virus that causes smallpox. Monkeypox symptoms are similar to smallpox symptoms, but milder, and monkeypox is rarely fatal.

How dangerous is monkeypox?

Infections with the type of monkeypox virus identified in this outbreak — the West African type — are rarely fatal. More than 99 percent of people who get this form of the disease are likely to survive. However, people with weakened immune systems, children under 8 years of age, people with a history of eczema, and people who are pregnant or breastfeeding may be more likely to get seriously ill or die.

Who is considered high risk?

People more likely to get monkeypox include:

- People who have been identified by public health officials as a contact of someone with monkeypox
- People who are aware that one of their sexual partners in the past two weeks has been diagnosed with monkeypox
- People who had multiple sexual partners in the past two weeks in an area with known monkeypox
- People whose jobs may expose them to orthopoxviruses, such as:
 - Laboratory workers who perform testing for orthopoxviruses
 - Laboratory workers who handle cultures or animals with orthopoxviruses
 - Some designated healthcare or public health workers

When should I get tested for monkeypox?

People who think they have monkeypox or have had close personal contact with someone who has monkeypox should visit a healthcare provider to help them decide if they need to be tested for monkeypox. If they decide that you should be tested, they will work with you to collect the specimens and send them to a laboratory for testing.



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Is monkeypox a sexually transmitted disease (STD) or a sexually transmitted infection (STI)?

No, monkeypox is not an STD or STI. It can more accurately be described as sexually transmissible. Sex is just one of the ways that monkeypox can spread. Any close, sustained skin-to-skin contact with someone who has monkeypox can spread the virus. Monkeypox can spread from person-to-person through direct contact with the infectious rash, scabs or bodily fluids. The contact does not have to be exclusively intimate or sexual.

SYMPTOMS AND SPREAD

What are the symptoms of monkeypox?

Symptoms include fever, headache, muscle aches and backache, swollen lymph nodes, chills, respiratory symptoms (sore throat, nasal congestion or cough) and a rash that may look like pimples or blisters that appear on the face, inside the mouth and in other places like hands, feet and chest. The rash goes through different stages before healing completely. The illness typically lasts two to four weeks.

Some people develop a rash first, followed by other symptoms. Others only experience a rash.

How does monkeypox spread?

Monkeypox spreads in different ways. The virus can spread from person-to-person through direct contact with the infectious rash, scabs or body fluids. It also can be spread by respiratory secretions during prolonged, face-to-face contact, or during intimate physical contact, such as kissing, cuddling or sex. In addition, pregnant people can spread the virus to their fetus through the placenta.

Touching items (such as clothing or linens) that previously touched the infectious rash or body fluids is another way monkeypox spreads. It's also possible for people to get monkeypox from infected animals, either by being scratched or bitten by the animal or by eating meat or using products from an infected animal.

Monkeypox can spread during the time symptoms start until the rash fully heals and a fresh layer of skin has formed.

People who do not have monkeypox symptoms cannot spread the virus to others.

How long does it take for someone infected with monkeypox to show symptoms?

Monkeypox symptoms usually start within three weeks of exposure to the virus. If someone has flu-like symptoms, they will usually develop a rash one to four days later.

Monkeypox can be spread from the time symptoms start until the rash has healed, all scabs have all fallen off and fresh layer of skin has formed. The illness typically lasts two-four weeks.



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What should I do if I have symptoms?

- See a healthcare provider if you notice a new or unexplained rash or other monkeypox symptoms.
- Remind the healthcare provider that monkeypox is circulating.
- Avoid close contact (including intimate physical contact) with others until a healthcare provider examines you.
- Avoid close contact with pets or other animals until a healthcare provider examines you.
- If you're waiting for test results, follow the same precautions.
- If your test is positive, stay isolated until your rash has healed, all scabs have fallen off and a fresh layer of intact skin has formed.
- Remain isolated if you have a fever, sore throat, nasal congestion or cough. Only go out to see a healthcare provider or for an emergency. Avoid public transportation.
- If you must leave isolation, cover the rash and wear a well-fitting mask.

Could my pet get monkeypox?

Monkeypox is zoonotic, meaning it can spread between animals and people. However, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) does not currently believe that monkeypox poses a high risk to pets. We are continuing to monitor the situation closely.

VACCINATION AND TREATMENT

Is a vaccine available yet?

Yes, the preferred vaccine to protect against monkeypox is JYNNEOS, which is a two-dose vaccine. The vaccine is used for protection against smallpox and monkeypox in individuals 18 years and older determined to be at high risk for smallpox or monkeypox infection. The Emergency Use Authorization also allows for use of the vaccine in individuals younger than 18 years who are determined to be high risk of monkeypox infection. People who receive JYNNEOS are not considered vaccinated until they receive both vaccine doses, which are given four weeks apart. Full protection is not conferred until two weeks after receipt of the second dose.

At this time, vaccine is being reserved for high-risk close contacts.

Am I eligible for the JYNNEOS vaccine?

CDC recommends vaccination for people who have been exposed to monkeypox and people who may be more likely to get monkeypox, including:

- People who have been identified by public health officials as a contact of someone with monkeypox
- People who know one of their sexual partners in the past two weeks has been diagnosed with monkeypox
- People who had multiple sexual partners in the past two weeks in an area with known monkeypox



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PREVENTION

How can I prevent becoming infected with monkeypox?

- Avoid close, skin-to-skin contact with the monkeypox rash.
 - Do not touch the rash or scabs of person with monkeypox.
 - Do not kiss, hug, cuddle or have sex with someone with monkeypox.
- Do not share eating utensils or cups.
- Do not handle or touch the bedding, towels or clothing of a sick person.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer, especially after contact with sick people.

Should I be concerned about going to crowded events?

People can get monkeypox if they have close, skin-to-skin contact with someone who has monkeypox. Early indications are that events with activities in which people engage in close, sustained skin-to-skin contact have resulted in cases of monkeypox. If you plan to attend an event, consider how much close, personal, skin-to-skin contact is likely to occur there.

Am I protected from monkeypox if I've had chickenpox?

No, monkeypox is not related to chickenpox.

Am I protected from monkeypox if I've had the smallpox vaccine previously?

Yes, you are. Monkeypox and smallpox viruses are genetically similar. Vaccines developed to protect against smallpox viruses may be used to prevent monkeypox infections.



Visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for information on safer sex, social gatherings and monkeypox.

