

Monkeypox FAQs

What is monkeypox?

Monkeypox is a disease caused by the monkeypox virus which is in the same family of viruses as smallpox, but symptoms from monkeypox are usually milder. However, people with HIV, individuals who are immunocompromised, children, adolescents, and people who are pregnant or breastfeeding may be at risk for increased disease severity and adverse health outcomes.

How is monkeypox spread?

Monkeypox can be spread in different ways. The virus can spread from person-to-person through:

- Direct contact with the infectious rash, scabs, or body fluids of an infected person.
- Respiratory secretions during prolonged face-to-face contact, or during close physical contact such as kissing, cuddling, or sex.
- Touching items such as clothing, bedding, or towels that have been used by someone with monkeypox.

Monkeypox can spread from the time symptoms start until the rash has fully healed and a fresh layer of skin has formed. The illness typically lasts 2-4 weeks.

What are the signs and symptoms of monkeypox?

Monkeypox symptoms usually start within three weeks of exposure to the virus, and may include:

- Fever
- Chills
- Headache
- Muscle aches
- Exhaustion
- Swollen lymph nodes
- Rash that can look like pimples or blisters that appears on the face, inside the mouth, and other parts of the body like the hands, feet, chest, genitals, or anus.

What steps can I take to prevent getting monkeypox?

The current outbreak is largely affecting gay, bisexual, or other men who have sex with men. However, anyone, regardless of gender or sexual orientation, can get it if they are in close contact with someone who has monkeypox.

Steps to protect yourself include:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Talk with your sexual partner(s) about any recent illness and being aware of new or unexplained sores or rashes on your body or partner's body.
- Avoid close, skin-to-skin contact with people who have a rash that looks like monkeypox.
 - Do not touch the rash or scabs of a person with monkeypox.
 - Do not kiss, hug, cuddle, or have sex with someone with monkeypox.
 - Do not share eating utensils or cups with a person with monkeypox.
- Avoid touching or handling bedding, towels, and clothing of a person with monkeypox.

What if I'm worried that I have been exposed?

If you feel sick or have unexplained rashes, or you're concerned about a potential or known exposure:

- **Get checked.** If you're an undergraduate or graduate student with the Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP), contact [Student Health Services](#) by calling (951) 827-3031. If you are not covered by SHIP or are faculty or staff, contact your medical provider.
- **Get tested.** Healthcare providers can test for monkeypox.
- **Get protected.** Vaccines are available in limited supply and can help even after an exposure. Vaccination after an exposure can prevent the onset of disease or reduce the symptoms of disease based on how soon an individual is vaccinated after an exposure.

Talk to a healthcare provider if you think you have been exposed to monkeypox or are at high risk for exposure.

What should I know about the monkeypox vaccine?

Vaccines are available in limited supply at no cost for:

- People who have been identified by public health officials as a contact of someone with monkeypox
- People who may have been exposed to monkeypox such as:
 - People who are aware that one of their sexual partners in the past 2 weeks has been diagnosed with monkeypox
 - People who had multiple sexual partners in the past 2 weeks in an area with known monkeypox cases.
- People at occupational risk for monkeypox according to [Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices \(ACIP\) guidance](#), including: laboratory workers who perform monkeypox testing, and clinical and public health workers who collect monkeypox specimens.

What do I do if I am diagnosed with monkeypox?

Follow the instructions from your medical provider. Students should isolate themselves in place or return home. Stay in a separate room or area away from people or pets you live, if possible.

[Detailed isolation and cleaning instructions](#) for monkeypox can be found on the CDC website.

Examples of monkeypox rash from CDC



Resources for more information

<https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/index.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/faq.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/specific-settings/congregate.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/pdf/monkeypox-interim-guidance-for-household-disinfection-508.pdf>

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Monkeypox.aspx>