



## **What is monkeypox?**

Monkeypox is a rare, zoonotic disease that is caused by infection with the monkeypox virus. Zoonotic diseases are infectious diseases that can be transmitted from animals to humans, humans to animals, and humans to humans.

## **How dangerous is it?**

While mild or severe cases can be extremely painful and require hospitalization, over 99% 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.

## **How does monkeypox spread?**

- Direct person-to-person contact with the infected rash, scab, or body fluid of the individual with monkeypox
- By respiratory secretion, face-to-face contact, or intimate interactions such as cuddling, kissing, and sex. It is particularly important to monitor pregnant women as the disease can spread to the fetus.
- Touching items (such as clothing or linens) that previously touched the infectious rash or body fluids.
- In rare cases, monkeypox can spread from infected animals, either by being scratched or bitten by the animal or by eating meat or using products from an infected animal.

## **What actions can be taken to prevent infection with the monkeypox virus?**

- 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.
- Do not handle or touch the bedding, towels, or clothing of a person with monkeypox.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.



## **What are the symptoms of monkeypox?**

Symptoms will often include rashes that can look like pimples or blisters. These can appear on the face, inside the mouth, and in other parts of the body such as hands, feet, chest genitals, or anus. Some individuals who have monkeypox will only experience rashes, however, other symptoms that are common with monkeypox include:

- Fever
- Headache
- Muscle aches and backache
- Swollen lymph nodes
- Chills
- Exhaustion

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

Monkeypox symptoms usually start to show within two weeks of exposure to the virus.

## **What to do if you've been exposed**

Although the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) currently considers monkeypox's risk to the general public as low, cases across the world are continuing to rise. If you believe you have been exposed to someone with monkeypox, please take the following precautions:

- Notify your healthcare provider immediately for consultation.
- Avoid gatherings, especially if they involve close, personal, skin-to-skin contact.
- Think about the people you have had close, personal, or sexual contact within the last 21 days, including people you met through dating apps. You might be asked to share this information if you have received a monkeypox diagnosis, to help stop the spread.

\*\*\* If you have signs or symptoms of monkeypox or are currently under isolation for monkeypox, please do not just walk-in to your provider's office. Please call ahead to ask for guidance. \*\*\*



## **Vaccination**

Monkeypox vaccinations are available to individuals who have been directly exposed to monkeypox and/or are at a high risk of contracting the monkeypox virus, as defined by the CDC. It is not recommended for everyone and will be provided to residents pending authorization from the local health department in partnership with a primary care provider. Public health will work with medical providers to offer vaccination to those with a high risk exposure. Household contacts and sexual partners are in the high risk group if connected to a confirmed case. Personnel who work in an occupational setting, including labs, where there is a risk of exposure, are approved to get the vaccine.

Vaccination is most effective if received within the first 4 days post-exposure. If given 5 to 14 days post-exposure, it may reduce the severity of the illness.

## **Is treatment available?**

Antivirals, such as tecovirimat (TPOXX), may be recommended for people who are more likely to get severely ill, like patients with weakened immune systems.

## **Where can I find additional information?**

<https://dshs.texas.gov/IDCU/disease/monkeypox/Monkeypox/>

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

<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/monkeypox>

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

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

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

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