

Do You Have Questions About Monkeypox?

We have answers.

What is monkeypox?

Monkeypox is a disease that can occur in humans. It is caused by infection with the monkeypox virus.¹ In 2022, an outbreak of monkeypox was identified in several countries, including the United States.

What are the symptoms of monkeypox?

Monkeypox symptoms typically develop 6 days after coming in contact with the virus. In some cases, this ranges from 0 to 21 days. The illness typically lasts 2 to 4 weeks.

Most people with monkeypox will get a rash. This rash may look like pimples or blisters on the hands, chest, genitals, or other parts of the body. Some people develop flu-like symptoms including fever, swollen lymph nodes, muscle aches, and exhaustion.

People who have a higher risk for severe illness include those²:

- with weakened immune systems
- under the age of 8
- with certain skin conditions such as eczema
- who are pregnant or breastfeeding.

It is rare for people with the monkeypox virus in this outbreak to die.

Sources:

1. About monkeypox. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Web site. <https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/about.html>. Updated July 22, 2022. Accessed July 27, 2022.
2. Frequently asked questions. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Web site. <https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/faq.html>. Updated July 13, 2022. Accessed July 27, 2022.
3. Isolation and infection control: home. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Web site. <https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/clinicians/infection-control-home.html>. Updated June 16, 2022. Accessed July 28, 2022.

How does monkeypox spread? Monkeypox can spread to anyone. It spreads through person-to-person contact with someone who has monkeypox or an object that the person has touched including¹:

- direct contact with the rash, scabs, or bodily fluids
- by breathing in particles (containing viruses) in the air that were spread when someone with monkeypox breathes, talks, sneezes, or coughs
- while kissing or during intimate sexual contact
- contact with clothing, bedding, toys, and other objects that were used by a person with monkeypox
- in pregnancy, when pregnant people can spread the virus to their baby through the placenta.

How can we prevent the spread of monkeypox in our communities?

Stay healthy by following these steps:

- Avoid skin-to-skin contact with people who have monkeypox or a rash that looks like monkeypox.
- Do not share eating utensils or cups with a person with monkeypox.
- Do not handle bedding, towels, or clothing that is not your own. If this is not possible, wear disposable medical gloves, use a well-fitting mask, and wash your hands with soap and water when you are done.³
- Wash your hands often with soap and water.
- Contact your health care provider if you have any monkeypox symptoms or think you have monkeypox.

