

What Is Monkeypox?

- Monkeypox is a contagious illness caused by the monkeypox virus.
- Most people have mild illness and recover without treatment. However, the rash (sores) can be painful.
- Anyone can get and spread monkeypox. Most, but not all, 2022 U.S. cases have been among gay, bisexual, or other men who have sex with men (MSM). This group, particularly MSM with multiple sex partners, is currently at greatest risk for exposure to monkeypox.

How Does Monkeypox Spread?

- Primarily through close or intimate skin-to-skin contact:
 - Sexual or intimate contact (including oral, anal, and vaginal sex)
 - Hugging, kissing, cuddling, and massage
 - Touching the rash (sores) or bodily fluids
 - Sharing a bed, towel, or clothes that have been in contact with an infected person and have not been washed
- Monkeypox does not spread by walking by someone or having a casual conversation with someone who is infected.

What Are The Symptoms Of Monkeypox?

- Skin rash on any part of your body (even if it is only 1 or 2 spots); for some people, this rash may be their only symptom
- Fever
- Chills
- Headache
- Muscle aches and back aches
- Swollen lymph nodes

Symptoms usually appear 3–17 days after exposure. The illness typically lasts 2–4 weeks.



Photo credit: UK Health Security Agency

What If I Have Symptoms?

- Separate yourself from other people and pets, cover your rash (sores), and contact your healthcare provider.
- It is important to call ahead before going to a healthcare facility and let them know that you are concerned about monkeypox.
- Avoid close physical contact with others until you have talked with your provider.

How Can I Prevent Monkeypox?

- Avoid close, skin-to-skin contact with another person's rash (sores) or scabs. Avoid kissing, hugging, cuddling or having sex with someone who is infected. Do not share eating utensils and cups. Do not share bedding, towels, or personal grooming devices.
- Limit activities that involve close, prolonged skin-to-skin contact.
- Wash your hands with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer after contact with infected individuals.
- If you're infected and unable to separate from others, wear a face mask to help block respiratory secretions (saliva and phlegm) and cover your rash (sores).

Vaccines are available for the prevention of monkeypox. See if you're eligible:

<https://www.arlingtonva.us/Monkeypox>

