

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

**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.

**Is monkeypox deadly?**

Infections with the type of monkeypox virus identified in this outbreak—the West African type—are rarely fatal. 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.

**Am I at risk of getting monkeypox?**

At this time, the risk of monkeypox in the United States is believed to be low. Monkeypox does not spread easily between people; however, anyone in close contact with a person with monkeypox can get it and should take steps to protect themselves. People who do not have monkeypox symptoms cannot spread the virus to others.

**When should someone 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.

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

Symptoms of monkeypox can include:

- Fever
  - Headache
  - Muscle aches and backache
  - Swollen lymph nodes
  - Chills
  - Exhaustion
  - Respiratory symptoms (e.g. sore throat, nasal congestion, or cough)
  - A rash that can look like pimples or blisters that appears on the face, inside the mouth, and on other parts of the body, like the hands, feet, chest, genitals, or anus.
    - The rash goes through different stages before healing completely.
- The illness typically lasts 2-4 weeks.

Sometimes, people get a rash first, followed by other symptoms. Others only experience a rash.

Symptoms usually appear one to two weeks after infection.

## **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.

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 is treatment for monkeypox?**

There are no treatments specifically for monkeypox virus infections. However, because of genetic similarities in the viruses, antiviral drugs used to treat smallpox may be used to treat monkeypox infections.

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

## **Is there a vaccine for monkeypox?**

Because monkeypox and smallpox viruses are genetically similar, vaccines developed to protect against smallpox viruses may be used to prevent monkeypox infections.

The U.S. government has two stockpiled vaccines—JYNNEOS and ACAM2000—that can prevent monkeypox in people who are exposed to the virus. Vaccines may be recommended for people who have had or may have contact with someone who has monkeypox, or for healthcare and public health workers who may be exposed to the virus.

## **Who should get vaccinated?**

CDC recommends vaccination for people who have been in close contact with people who have monkeypox. Currently, this outbreak is largely affecting gay, bisexual, or other men who have sex with men. People who may be eligible for vaccination include:

- 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

Talk to your health care provider if you think you have been exposed to monkeypox or are at high risk for exposure.

## **How do I protect myself from monkeypox?**

- 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.
- Avoid contact with objects and materials that a person with monkeypox has used.
  - 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, especially before eating or touching your face and after you use the bathroom.