



Frequently Asked Questions

Updated August 5, 2022

Please refer to [Clinician FAQs](#) for clinical questions.

Basics

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.

[Learn more about monkeypox.](#)

Are there different types of monkeypox?

There are two types of monkeypox virus: West African and Congo Basin. Infections in the current outbreak are from the West African type.

[Learn more about monkeypox.](#)

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.

The Congo Basin type of monkeypox virus has a fatality rate around 10%.

[Learn more about monkeypox.](#)

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. If they decide that you should be tested, they will work with you to collect the specimens and send them to a laboratory for testing,

Symptoms

What are the symptoms of monkeypox?

Symptoms of monkeypox can include:

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

[Learn more about monkeypox signs and symptoms.](#)

What should I do if I have symptoms?

- See a healthcare provider if you notice a new or unexplained rash or other monkeypox symptoms.
- Remind the healthcare provider that monkeypox is present in the United States.
- Avoid close contact (including intimate physical contact) with others until you see a healthcare provider.
- Avoid close contact with pets or other animals until you see a healthcare provider.
- If you're waiting for test results, follow the same precautions.
- If your test result is positive, stay isolated and observe other [prevention practices](#) until your rash has healed, all scabs have fallen off, and a fresh layer of intact skin has formed.
- Remain isolated if you have a fever, sore throat, nasal congestion, or cough. Only go out to see a healthcare provider or for an emergency. Avoid public transportation.
- If you must leave isolation, cover the rash and wear a well-fitting mask.


Spread

How does monkeypox spread?

Monkeypox 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.

Monkeypox can spread from the time symptoms start until the rash has fully healed and a fresh layer of skin has formed. Anyone in close personal contact with a person with monkeypox can get it and should take steps to protect themselves.


[Learn more about how monkeypox spreads.](#)

Is monkeypox a sexually transmitted infection (STI)? 

Monkeypox can more accurately be described as “sexually transmissible.” In other words, sex is just one of the ways that monkeypox can be spread. In the past, monkeypox outbreaks have been linked to direct exposure to infected animals and animal products, with limited person-to-person spread. In the current monkeypox outbreak, the virus is spreading primarily through close personal contact. This may include contact with infectious lesions or respiratory secretions via close, sustained skin-to-skin contact that occurs during sex. However, any close, sustained skin-to-skin contact with someone who has monkeypox can spread the virus. The contact does not have to be exclusively intimate or sexual.


[Learn more about lowering your risk of monkeypox during sex.](#)

Prevention

How can monkeypox be prevented? 

- Avoid close, skin-to-skin contact with people who have a rash that looks like monkeypox.
- Avoid contact with objects and materials that a person with monkeypox has used.
- 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.


[Learn more about preventing monkeypox.](#)

Should people be concerned about going to crowded events? 

People can get monkeypox if they have close, skin-to-skin contact with someone who has monkeypox. Early indications are that events with activities in which people engage in close, sustained skin-to-skin contact have resulted in cases of monkeypox. If you plan to attend an event, consider how much close, personal, skin-to-skin contact is likely to occur there.

[Learn more about social gatherings and monkeypox.](#)


Treatment

What treatments are available 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.

[Learn more about monkeypox treatment.](#)

Vaccination

Is there a vaccine to prevent 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.

[Learn more about monkeypox vaccines.](#)

Who should get vaccinated?

CDC recommends vaccination for people who have been exposed to monkeypox and people who may be more likely to get monkeypox, including:

- People who have been identified by public health officials as a contact of someone with monkeypox
- People who know 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

[Learn more about monkeypox vaccines.](#)

Where can you find out if you're eligible for a vaccine?

If you think you may be eligible for vaccination, contact a healthcare provider or your local health department. They can help you determine if you should get vaccinated.

[Learn more about monkeypox vaccines.](#)

If I am a man and have had multiple male sexual partners recently, does that automatically make me eligible for the vaccine?

No. Having multiple sexual partners is one consideration, but there are others, such as whether you live in an area with ongoing spread of monkeypox or if one of your partners has recently been infected with monkeypox. If you think you have monkeypox or might be at risk for infection, contact a healthcare provider.

[Learn more about monkeypox vaccines.](#)

Should everyone who is sexually active get vaccinated?

No, CDC does not recommend widespread vaccination against monkeypox at this time. During this outbreak, people who are sexually active are not considered to be at risk for monkeypox unless their sexual partners have monkeypox or they have had multiple sexual partners within the past 14 days in areas where monkeypox cases have been reported.


[Learn more about who should get vaccinated.](#)

Monkeypox and HIV

Are people with HIV more likely to get monkeypox?

CDC doesn't know if having [HIV](#) increases the likelihood of getting monkeypox. Monkeypox can spread to anyone through prolonged, close, personal, often skin-to-skin contact, as well as through contact with objects, fabrics (clothing, bedding, or towels), and surfaces that have been used by someone with monkeypox, or contact with respiratory secretions, through kissing and other face-to-face contact.

Are people with HIV more likely to have more severe illness if they get monkeypox?

CDC continues to monitor monkeypox among people with HIV. During the current monkeypox outbreak, there does not appear to be more severe monkeypox illness in people who have HIV and are [virally suppressed](#) (having less than 200 copies of HIV per milliliter of blood). In fact, the [World Health Organization \(WHO\) monkeypox guidance](#)  states, "People living with HIV on antiretroviral therapy with suppressed viral load are not considered to be immunosuppressed." However, people with HIV who are not virally suppressed may be at increased risk for severe illness and death from monkeypox.

What treatment is recommended for people with HIV who get monkeypox?

Currently there is no treatment approved specifically for monkeypox. However, medicine (antivirals) developed for use in patients with smallpox may help treat people with monkeypox.

[See the monkeypox Treatment Information for Healthcare Professionals page.](#)

Is a vaccine recommended and are vaccines safe for people with HIV?

At this time, vaccination is recommended for people with exposures to a probable or confirmed case with monkeypox, for example people who have had close physical contact with someone diagnosed with monkeypox. Vaccination may also be offered to people who had a presumed exposure, such as men who have sex with men who have had multiple sexual partners during the past 14 days in a jurisdiction with known monkeypox activity.

There are currently two licensed vaccines in the United States to prevent smallpox – JYNNEOS and ACAM2000. These smallpox vaccines may provide protection against monkeypox because smallpox and monkeypox are very similar viruses. Only JYNNEOS is FDA approved for the prevention of monkeypox in people 18 and older.

Will monkeypox treatment or vaccines interact with HIV medications?

Data is limited, but most HIV treatment can be safely given with monkeypox treatment and smallpox vaccines. People with HIV should inform their healthcare provider of all their medications to help determine if any interactions exist.

Does monkeypox affect how well pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) works for HIV prevention?

No, [HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis \(PrEP\)](#) is still effective and should be continued as prescribed.

What can people with HIV do to protect themselves from monkeypox?

People with HIV should follow the same recommendations as everyone else to protect themselves from monkeypox.

- Avoid direct contact with rashes, sores, or scabs on a person with monkeypox, including during intimate contact such as sex. We believe this is currently the most common way that monkeypox is spreading in the U.S.
- Avoid contact with objects, fabrics (clothing, bedding, or towels), and surfaces that have been used by someone with monkeypox.

monkeypox.

- Avoid contact with respiratory secretions, through kissing and other face-to-face contact from a person with monkeypox.

For more information, including guidance around sex visit [Monkeypox Facts for People Who are Sexually Active | Monkeypox | Poxvirus | CDC](#)

Pets and Animals

Could my pet get monkeypox?



Monkeypox is zoonotic, meaning it can spread between animals and people. However, CDC does not currently believe that monkeypox poses a high risk to pets. We are continuing to monitor the situation closely.

[Learn more about monkeypox and your pets in the home.](#)
