



Monkeypox in Animals

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Monkeypox is a zoonotic disease, meaning that it can spread between animals and people, and is caused by *Monkeypox virus*, an *Orthopoxvirus*. While the animal reservoir is unknown, small mammals (rope and sun squirrels, giant-pouched rats, African dormice) are thought to maintain the virus in the environments of West and Central Africa. People can get infected with the virus through direct contact with infected animals, often while hunting, trapping, and processing infected animals or the infected body parts and fluids of animals. Small mammals can carry the virus, sometimes without apparent



symptoms, while non-human primates can get sick with monkeypox and have signs of disease like humans. In 2003, an outbreak of monkeypox in domesticated prairie dogs occurred after they shared bedding and caging with a shipment of infected small mammals from West Africa. This led to 47 human cases in 6 states in the United States. Instances of animal-to-animal and animal-to-person spread, such as the 2003 outbreak, demonstrate the need to reduce the risk of secondary infections to and from animals by isolating infected people as well as exposed and infected animals.

What we know about monkeypox in animals

- *Monkeypox virus* can infect a wide range of mammal species, including monkeys, anteaters, hedgehogs, prairie dogs, squirrels, and shrews.
- We are still learning which species of animals can get monkeypox. While we do not know if reptiles, amphibians, or birds can get monkeypox, it is unlikely since these animals have not been found to be infected with other orthopoxviruses.
- Not all animals may have a rash when they have monkeypox.
- There are no reports of sick people transmitting *Monkeypox virus* to animals.
- Infected animals can spread *Monkeypox virus* to people, and it is possible that people who are infected [can spread Monkeypox virus to animals](#) through close contact, including petting, cuddling, hugging, kissing, licking, sharing sleeping areas, and sharing food.
- *Monkeypox virus* can be found in the rash caused by monkeypox (scabs, crusts, fluids) and infected bodily fluids, including respiratory secretions, and potentially in urine and feces.

Monkeypox in pets and other animals

We are still learning about which mammals are susceptible to infection. We should assume any mammal can be infected with *Monkeypox virus*. The table shows which animals can be infected with *Monkeypox virus* or other closely related orthopoxviruses.

Type of rodents	Can be infected with monkeypox?	Can be infected with other orthopoxviruses?
Prairie dogs	Yes	Yes
Squirrels	Yes	Yes
Marmots and groundhogs	Yes	Yes
Chinchillas	Yes	Unknown
Giant-pouched rats	Yes	Unknown
Gerbils	Unknown	Yes
Guinea pigs	Unknown	Yes
Hamsters	Unknown	Yes
Mice	Possibly*	Yes
Rats	Possibly*	Yes

Type of carnivores	Can be infected with monkeypox?	Can be infected with other orthopoxviruses?
Dogs	Yes	Yes
Cats	Unknown	Yes

Type of lagomorphs	Can be infected with monkeypox?	Can be infected with other orthopoxviruses?
Domestic rabbits	Adults: possibly*	Yes

Type of insectivores	Can be infected with monkeypox?	Can be infected with other orthopoxviruses?
Hedgehogs	Yes	Unknown
Shrews	Yes	Yes

Type of non-human primates	Can be infected with	Can be infected with other
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Type of non-human primates	Can be infected with monkeypox?	Can be infected with other orthopoxviruses?
Monkeys	Yes	Yes
Apes	Yes	Yes

Type of domestic and farm animals	Can be infected with monkeypox?	Can be infected with other orthopoxviruses?
Cows	Unknown	Yes
Camels	Unknown	Yes
Goats	Unknown	Unknown
Sheep	Unknown	Unknown
Pigs	Unknown	Unknown

Type of wildlife	Can be infected with monkeypox?	Can be infected with other orthopoxviruses?
Raccoons	Unknown	Yes
Skunks	Unknown	Yes
Voles	Unknown	Yes
Badgers	Unknown	Yes
Coyotes	Unknown	Yes
Foxes	Unknown	Yes

*Indicates that not all animals of this type are susceptible, this may vary by species, and variety or strain of the animal.

More Information

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