



## Monkeypox

# Notifying Close Contacts

Updated September 15, 2022

If you have been diagnosed with monkeypox, it's important to notify your close contacts that they may have been exposed to monkeypox as soon as possible, so they can watch for signs and symptoms, get tested, and isolate if they have symptoms. They should consider getting vaccinated if exposed less than 14 days ago, ideally within 4 days of exposure. Vaccination provides the best chance to prevent the disease or make it less severe. By letting your close contacts know they may have been exposed to monkeypox, you are helping to protect them and everyone around them.

## Who Are Your Close Contacts?

A close contact is anyone, since the start of your monkeypox [symptoms](#) you:

- Have had sex with; this includes oral, anal, or vaginal sex.
- Have touched or who came in contact with the rash on your body.
- Have hugged, cuddled, kissed, or had other prolonged skin-to-skin contact with.
- Shared cups, utensils, towels, clothing, bedding, blankets, or other objects and materials with.

## Make a List of Close Contacts to Notify

Think about:

- Who were/are your sex partners?
- Who lives with you (including family members, roommates, or overnight guests)?
- Who have you recently had prolonged skin-to-skin contact with? Consider the following:
  - In-person meetings or gatherings you attended.
  - People you have met with recently (i.e., for a home visit, at a restaurant, for drinks, for dancing, for exercise, or for a party).
  - People you played contact sports with (for example, basketball or wrestling).
  - Appointments with health care providers, including dentists.
  - People who have provided you services, such as childcare providers, house cleaners, barbers, hairdressers, nail salon workers, massage therapists, adult care workers, etc.
  - People you work or volunteer with outside of the home.

## Tips on Preparing and What to Say

If you are feeling a little uncertain about notifying your contacts, it can be helpful to prepare beforehand to make sure the communication goes smoothly. Below are few tips that may be useful:

- Think through how you would want to be notified in the same situation.
- Consider safety and privacy. If texting, messaging, or emailing, consider whether other people might be able read your communication. If you are notifying by phone, first ask your contact if they are in a place where they can speak privately.


- Saying the words out loud can help you think through what you want to say and how you want to say it before you reach out.
- Consider the person and prepare how you would want to calmly react to the different types of responses you might get.

An example of what you can say to your close contacts could be:

“Hi. I need to talk to you about something important. Do you have a few minutes to talk privately? I was diagnosed with monkeypox (or tested positive) on [xxx date]. Monkeypox can spread through close or intimate contact. Since we spent time together on [xxx date], I wanted to let you know. You should check for symptoms and get tested ASAP if you have symptoms. The CDC has information on their website at [www.cdc.gov/monkeypox](http://www.cdc.gov/monkeypox).”

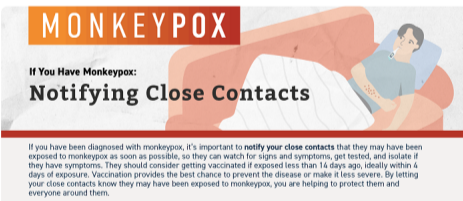
## Other Options for Notifying Your Close Contacts

If you are unable to notify your close contacts yourself, there are other options available to you:

- › **Health Department Assistance.** You may be contacted by a public health professional from your local health department, typically called a disease intervention specialist or DIS. A DIS may reach out to you to discuss your diagnosis, answer any questions you have, and, if you want help, confidentially notify your contacts. They will protect your privacy and not disclose anything about you. When they notify your contacts, they will connect them to services that they may need, including medical care, testing, treatment, and/or vaccines, as appropriate. However, some health departments may not be able to provide this service depending on local resources.
- › **Anonymous Notification Services.** You can use a reputable, online service that can notify your contacts of their possible exposure to monkeypox while protecting your anonymity. One such site is [tellyourpartner.org](http://tellyourpartner.org) . The service is free. You can first explore the site to learn more about how they protect your privacy and the language that will be used in the notification. This site also will let your contacts know where they can obtain additional information about monkeypox.

Choose the method of notifying your contacts that you are most comfortable with. You can use different methods for different contacts. The important thing is to make sure that your contacts have the information they need in time to make decisions about their health and prevent spreading monkeypox to others.

## Other Resources



**MONKEYPOX**  
If You Have Monkeypox:  
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[www.cdc.gov/monkeypox](http://www.cdc.gov/monkeypox)



**If You Have Monkeypox: Notifying Close Contacts**  [2 MB, 2 pages]

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## Related Pages

- › [What to Do If You Are Sick](#)
- › [Prevent Spread to Others](#)
- › [Home Disinfection](#)
- › [Treatment](#)

