



Monkeypox

CDC's Response to the 2022 Monkeypox Outbreak

Updated September 21, 2022

CDC has [experience responding to monkeypox](#). We have the tools to effectively respond to this outbreak and are working in several areas to help stop the spread of the virus and end the outbreak.

Case identification and contact tracing

- CDC shares detailed information on how to identify and test for monkeypox through several clinician- and laboratory-focused channels, including [Health Alert Network \(HAN\)](#) messages, [Clinician Outreach and Communication Activity \(COCA\)](#) calls, the [Laboratory Outreach Communication System \(LOCS\)](#), and other outreach. CDC has also urged [healthcare providers](#) to look out for the rash associated with monkeypox.
- CDC advises U.S. state, tribal, local, and territorial [health departments](#) on tracking potential cases, contact tracing, and responding to additional identified cases.
- CDC works with these health officials to identify people who may have been exposed to the virus and tell them how to monitor their health and seek care if symptoms appear.

Testing

- CDC supports testing for orthopoxviruses, which include the virus that causes monkeypox, across the [Laboratory Response Network \(LRN\)](#). LRN laboratories can perform up to 10,000 tests each week using the CDC-developed, FDA-cleared non-variola *Orthopoxvirus* test.
- Four commercial laboratory companies perform monkeypox testing with the [CDC-developed, FDA-cleared non-variola Orthopoxvirus test](#). Together, these commercial laboratories can perform up to 40,000 tests each week:
 - [Labcorp](#)
 - [Mayo Clinic Laboratories](#)
 - [Aegis Sciences](#)
 - [Sonic Healthcare USA](#)
- [Quest Diagnostics](#) can perform up to 30,000 monkeypox tests each week with the PCR test that Quest developed. This means that U.S. laboratories can perform up to 80,000 monkeypox tests per week.
- CDC laboratories conduct genetic sequencing on positive specimens to track any changes to the virus and identify potential variants that might spread more easily or respond differently to treatments.

Investigating to better understand the outbreak and inform response efforts

CDC researchers are collaborating with partners to learn:

- How long the virus has been circulating.
- How the virus was introduced into some of the current clusters of cases.

- The clinical course of illness.
- Whether the virus is being spread through contact with semen or vaginal fluids.



Global coordination

With cases of monkeypox being reported in several countries around the world, CDC is collaborating and consulting with other countries experiencing monkeypox.

- This includes partnering with Nigeria Centers for Disease Control on testing and sequencing to better understand the evolution of the virus in Nigeria and the current global outbreak.


Outreach to clinicians

CDC has been distributing detailed information on monkeypox to clinicians to help them identify potential infections and order testing for patients.

- Much of that information shared through interactive partner calls that include:
 - Hosting Clinician Outreach and Communication Activity (COCA) calls that shared information with more than 17,000 participants.
 - Disseminating news of new commercial laboratory testing options to more than 64,000 subscribers of its COCA Now email updates.
 - Distributing Health Alert Network notices to inform thousands of clinicians about updated and expanded case definitions to encourage testing for monkeypox in people with a rash and who may be at risk for developing the virus.
 - Sharing weekly updates with more than 90 partner organizations, including state, tribal, local, and territorial agencies, public health organizations, and clinical, community, and LGBTQ+ organizations that forward information to their members.
 - Conducting ongoing consultations through a Clinician Call Center that was promptly set up to respond to individual providers and state and local health officials.
- CDC works with our partners to learn how long the virus has been circulating; how it was introduced into some of the current clusters of cases; the clinical course of illness; and how the virus is being spread.
- CDC helps clinicians get access to vaccines and therapeutics for people who may have been exposed to monkeypox.
- CDC provides technical assistance and responds to inquiries and information requests from state, tribal, local, and territorial health departments and partner organizations.
- CDC also holds weekly partner calls and distributes a weekly partner resource email that is widely distributed across a wide cross-section of partners.
- CDC held a monkeypox webinar for the American Medical Association.
- CDC issues [letter](#)  [\[PDF – 181 KB\]](#) ([text file](#)  [\[TXT – 5 KB\]](#)) to clinicians highlighting pain management as a cornerstone of treatment for monkeypox virus infection.

Raising awareness among partners, disproportionately affected communities, and the public

- Many—though not all—of the reported monkeypox cases have been among gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men. Because of this, CDC has emphasized the need to identify and use specific channels to promote messages that directly reach gay and bisexual men (across racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, and geographic backgrounds).
- CDC provides information to a wider audience about symptoms and the behaviors that can lead to the spread of monkeypox.

- CDC's webpage [Reducing Stigma in Monkeypox Communication and Community Engagement](#) offers tips for creating and sharing informational and prevention messages in a way that reduces the chances of stigmatizing people infected with (or potentially exposed to) monkeypox virus.
- CDC is raising awareness of the current situation with multiple partners to reach disproportionately affected communities, including by working with our partners at [Building Healthy Online Communities](#)  to build awareness via social media.
- CDC works with community health organizations, including multiple partners in the LGBTQIA+ community, to raise awareness of the outbreak and share accurate information about what people can do to protect their health and the health of others.
- CDC developed informational materials for consumers, including [fact sheets](#) for sexually active people and for [social gatherings](#) where sex or other prolonged, close contact may occur.
- CDC responds to questions from the media and questions received via [CDC INFO](#).

Infection prevention and control

- CDC updated its website on infection prevention and control in healthcare settings to provide more detail on waste management. Sections about visitation and the management of healthcare personnel and patients exposed to monkeypox were also added.
- CDC posted additional considerations for infection prevention and control in non-healthcare settings, including homes and congregate settings like dormitories, homeless shelters, and correctional facilities.

Improving access to effective vaccines and therapeutics

- CDC supports the federal government's National Strategy to vaccinate and protect communities disproportionately affected by this outbreak by:
 - Prioritizing vaccines for areas with the highest numbers of cases.
 - Providing guidance to state, tribal, local, and territorial health officials to aid their planning and response efforts.