

Mpox



Mpox

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CDC is updating webpages with the term "mpox" to reduce stigma and other issues associated with prior terminology. This change is aligned with the recent [World Health Organization](#) decision.

Frequently Asked Questions

Updated February 2, 2023

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

Basics

What is mpox?



Mpox is a rare disease caused by infection with the mpox virus. Mpox virus is part of the same family of viruses as variola virus, the virus that causes smallpox. Mpox symptoms are similar to smallpox symptoms, but milder, and mpox is rarely fatal.

[Learn more about mpox.](#)

When should someone get tested for mpox?



People who think they have mpox or have had close personal contact with someone who has mpox should visit a healthcare provider to help them decide if they need to be tested for mpox. 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 mpox?



Symptoms of mpox 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 mpox 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 mpox symptoms.
 - Remind the healthcare provider that mpox 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.
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Spread

How does mpox spread?



Mpox 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.

A person with mpox can spread it to others from the time symptoms start until the rash has fully healed and a fresh layer of skin has formed. As of February 2023, [new data](#) show that some people can spread mpox to others from one to four days before their symptoms appear. It's not clear how many people this has affected during the current outbreak. There is currently no evidence showing that people who never develop symptoms have spread the virus to someone else. CDC will continue to monitor the [latest information](#) about [how mpox spreads](#).

Is mpox a sexually transmitted infection (STI)?



Mpox can more accurately be described as "sexually transmissible." In other words, sex is just one of the ways that mpox can be spread. In the past, mpox outbreaks have been linked to direct exposure to infected animals and animal products, with limited person-to-person spread. In the current mpox 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 mpox can spread the virus. The contact does not have to be exclusively intimate or sexual.

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

Can mpox spread through water in pools, hot tubs, or splash pads? 

No studies have found a clear link between mpox and water in pools, hot tubs, or splash pads. The mpox virus is killed in water at the chlorine levels recommended for disinfection in recreational water venues by CDC and required by U.S. jurisdictions.

However, it is possible to spread mpox to others through close, skin-to-skin contact. It can also be spread by sharing objects that a person with mpox used, such as towels, kickboards, pool toys, or clothing.


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

Prevention

How can mpox be prevented? 

- Avoid close, skin-to-skin contact with people who have a rash that looks like mpox.
- Avoid contact with objects and materials that a person with mpox 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 mpox.](#)

Should people be concerned about going to crowded events? 

People can get mpox if they have close, skin-to-skin contact with someone who has mpox. Early indications are that events with activities in which people engage in close, sustained skin-to-skin contact have resulted in cases of mpox. 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 mpox.](#)

Treatment

What treatments are available for mpox? 

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

[Learn more about mpox treatment.](#)

Vaccination

Is there a vaccine to prevent mpox? 

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

The U.S. government has two stockpiled vaccines—JYNNEOS and ACAM2000—that can prevent mpox in people who are exposed to the virus.

[Learn more about mpox vaccines.](#)

Who should get vaccinated?

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

- People who have been identified by public health officials as a contact of someone with mpox
- People who know one of their sexual partners in the past 2 weeks has been diagnosed with mpox
- People who had multiple sexual partners in the past 2 weeks in an area with known mpox

[Learn more about mpox 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 mpox 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 mpox or if one of your partners has recently been infected with mpox. If you think you have mpox or might be at risk for infection, contact a healthcare provider.

[Learn more about mpox vaccines.](#)

Pets and Animals

Could my pet get mpox?

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

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