

Monkeypox

What You Need to Know

What is Monkeypox?

Monkeypox is a viral zoonosis (a virus transmitted to humans from animals) with symptoms similar to those seen in the past in smallpox patients, although it is clinically less severe. Monkeypox is a rare disease caused by infection with the monkeypox virus, according to the [U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#).

How does monkeypox spread?

Monkeypox is much harder to contract via casual conversations, or in a classroom setting than COVID-19. However, anyone can get the virus through close contact. While it is not a sexually transmitted infection, it is most easily spread through skin-to-skin contact and is often passed along during sexual activity.

Monkeypox spreads through close contact (usually skin-to-skin), including direct contact with monkeypox rash, scabs or body fluids from a person with monkeypox; touching objects, fabrics (clothing, bedding, or towels) and surfaces that have been used by someone with monkeypox; or through contact with respiratory secretions.

A person with monkeypox can spread it to others from the time symptoms start until the rash has fully healed and a fresh layer of skin has formed. The illness typically lasts two to four weeks.

How can I protect myself from monkeypox?

Take the following steps to help prevent against the virus:

- Avoid close, skin-to-skin contact with people who have a rash that looks like monkeypox.
 - Do not touch the rash or scabs of a person with monkeypox.
 - Do not kiss, hug or have sex with someone with monkeypox.
- Avoid contact with objects and materials that a person with monkeypox has used.
 - Do not share eating utensils or cups with a person with monkeypox

- Do not handle or touch the bedding, towels or clothing of a person with monkeypox.
- 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.

What are the symptoms?

Monkeypox can be spread from the time symptoms start until the rash has healed, all scabs have fallen off, and a fresh layer of skin has formed. The illness typically lasts two to four weeks.

Monkeypox symptoms may include:

- Fever
- Headache
- Muscle aches and backache
- Swollen lymph nodes
- Chills
- Exhaustion
- Respiratory problems (e.g. sore throat, nasal congestion, or cough)
- A rash that may be located on or near the genital's, hands, feet, chest, face or mouth
 - The rash will go through several stages, including scabs, before healing
 - The rash can look like pimples or blisters and may be painful or itchy.

****You may experience all or only a few symptoms****

Monkeypox symptoms usually start within three weeks of exposure to the virus. If someone has flu-like symptoms, they will usually develop a rash one to four days later. Some people get a rash first, followed by other symptoms. Others may only develop a rash.

Vaccine and treatment for monkeypox

There are no treatments specifically for monkeypox. However, monkeypox and smallpox are genetically similar, meaning that antiviral drugs and vaccines

developed to protect against smallpox may be used to prevent and treat monkeypox.

If you have symptoms of monkeypox, you should talk to your healthcare provider, even if you don't think you have had contact with someone who has monkeypox.

According to the Texas Department of Health, vaccines and treatment are in limited supply and medical providers must obtain approval for testing, vaccine and treatment from the local health department.