

Monkeypox



Monkeypox is a rare disease that is caused by infection with monkeypox virus.

Transmission

Monkeypox virus can spread when a person comes into contact with the virus from an infected animal, infected person, or materials contaminated with the virus.

Monkeypox spreads between people primarily through direct contact with infectious sores, scabs, or body fluids. It also can be spread by respiratory secretions during prolonged, face-to-face contact. Monkeypox can spread during intimate contact between people, including during sex, as well as activities like kissing, cuddling, or touching parts of the body with monkeypox sores.

Signs and Symptoms

In humans, the symptoms of monkeypox are similar to but milder than the symptoms of smallpox. Monkeypox begins with fever, headache, muscle aches, and exhaustion. The main difference between symptoms of smallpox and monkeypox is that monkeypox causes lymph nodes to swell (lymphadenopathy) while smallpox does not. The incubation period (time from infection to symptoms) for monkeypox is usually 7–14 days but can range from 5–21 days. The illness begins with:

- Fever
- Headache
- Muscle aches
- Backache
- Swollen lymph nodes
- Chills
- Exhaustion

Within 1 to 3 days (sometimes longer) after the appearance of fever, the patient develops a rash, often beginning on the face then spreading to other parts of the body.

What You Should Do

Anyone with a rash that looks like monkeypox should talk to their healthcare provider, even if they don't think they had contact with someone who has monkeypox. People who may be at higher risk might include but are not limited to those who:

- Had contact with someone who had a rash that looks like monkeypox or someone who was diagnosed with confirmed or probable monkeypox
- Had skin-to-skin contact with someone in a social network experiencing monkeypox activity, this includes men who have sex with men who meet partners through an online website, digital application (“app”), or social event (e.g., a bar or party)
- Traveled outside the US to a country with confirmed cases of monkeypox or where monkeypox activity has been ongoing
- Had contact with a dead or live wild animal or exotic pet that exists only in Africa or used a product derived from such animals (e.g., game meat, creams, lotions, powders, etc.)