

# MONKEY POX: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



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Monkeypox is a viral disease that can cause rashes and other symptoms. It does not commonly occur in the US. Still, there is an outbreak of monkeypox, with cases spreading in Washington state and across the country. Many current cases occur in men who have sex with men, although monkeypox can spread person-to-person with any type of close, skin-to-skin contact. The first human case of monkeypox was recorded in 1970.

## How it Spreads

Monkeypox spreads in different ways. The virus can spread from person to person through:

- Direct contact with the infectious rash, scabs, or body fluids
- Respiratory secretions during prolonged, face-to-face contact or during intimate physical contact, such as kissing, cuddling, or sex
- Touching items (such as clothing or linens) that previously touched the infectious rash or body fluids
- Pregnant people can spread the virus to their fetus through the placenta

Symptoms of monkeypox can include:

- Fever
- Headache
- Muscle aches and backache
- Swollen lymph nodes
- Chills
- Exhaustion
- 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.

## Prevention Steps

Take the following steps to prevent getting monkeypox:

- Avoid close, skin-to-skin contact with people with a rash that looks like monkeypox.
- Do not touch the rash or scabs of a person with monkeypox.
- Do not kiss, hug, cuddle or have sex with someone with monkeypox.
- 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.
- Vaccination

CDC recommends vaccination for people who have been exposed to monkeypox and people who are at higher risk of being exposed to monkeypox, including:

- People whom public health officials have identified as a contact of someone with monkeypox
- People who may have been exposed to monkeypox, such as:
- People who are aware that one of their sexual partners in the past two weeks has been diagnosed with monkeypox
- People who had multiple sexual partners in the past two weeks in an area with known monkeypox

## Treatment

There are no treatments specifically for monkeypox virus infections. However, monkeypox and smallpox viruses are genetically similar, so antiviral drugs and vaccines developed to protect against smallpox may be used to prevent and treat monkeypox virus infections.