



Monkeypox FAQs

What is monkeypox?

- Monkeypox is a rare viral disease that can be transmitted from infected animals to humans or human to human.

How is monkeypox spread?

- Skin-to-skin contact with lesions, blisters, rashes
- Contact with objects, fabrics (such as bedding, clothes and personal shared items) and surfaces used by someone who has the virus
- The virus can enter the body through breaks in the skin or through the eyes and mouth
- Someone with monkeypox will usually pass on the virus once they develop a skin rash or blisters, but it may also spread before a rash appears (i.e. when they have early symptoms including fever and headache)
- While monkeypox is not a sexually transmitted infection (STI), sexual activities often include close contact
- Recent global outbreaks are among people who identify as gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men, however anyone can be exposed during close contact with a positive case
- A mother can pass the disease to her baby via the placenta or during childbirth causing congenital monkeypox
- People remain contagious until all sores have crusted over, the scabs have fallen off and the new layer of skin has formed (sometimes up to 21 days)

What are the symptoms of monkeypox?

- Symptoms typically appear from 5-21 days after exposure
 - Fever
 - Headache
 - Muscle aches
 - Backache
 - Swollen lymph nodes
 - Chills
 - Feeling extremely tired
 - Cough or sore throat
 - Runny nose
 - Rash with blisters that can appear one to three days after fever, but in some cases, can appear before fever or other symptoms. The rash usually begins as flat red spots (that can look like pimples or heat rash), which turn into blisters and then form a crust. In some cases, the rash appears around the mouth, genital or anorectal (bum) areas.

- In most cases the symptoms of monkeypox go away on their own within a few weeks
- Complications from monkeypox infection can develop, however complications are not common.

What are the complications of monkeypox?

- Bacterial infection of skin from infected open lesions
- Corneal infection (may lead to vision loss)
- Sepsis (infection in the blood)
- Pneumonia (lung infection)
- Encephalitis (brain infection)
- Death

How is monkeypox diagnosed?

- Your health care provider will determine if you have monkeypox based on your symptoms and a lab test

How is monkeypox treated?

- Most people do not require treatment for monkeypox
- Care is focused on symptom management and reducing potential complications from the disease
- Some people can get very sick from monkeypox – especially those who are immunocompromised. Call your local provider or go to the emergency department (call ahead first) if you are very symptomatic or are experiencing complications
- Monkeypox vaccine (Imvamune®) is not a treatment for monkeypox

What should you do if you become ill or think you may have been exposed to monkeypox?

- If you think you have been exposed to monkeypox, monitor yourself for symptoms for 21 days following your exposure. Contact your local health center for guidance on vaccination. You may be eligible to receive a vaccine to protect you after you have been exposed
- If you begin to experience [symptoms for monkeypox](#) isolate immediately and call your healthcare provider or local public health for advice and to arrange testing

How can we prevent the spread of monkeypox?

- Imvamune® vaccine is approved in Canada for pre-exposure and post-exposure monkeypox vaccination for those who meet the vaccine eligibility criteria
 - Monkeypox vaccine contains modified virus and cannot make you sick

- Pre-exposure monkeypox vaccination (receiving the vaccine prior to possible exposure) or post-exposure monkeypox vaccination (receiving the vaccine after you have been exposed) may be an option on a case-by-case basis and should be discussed with your health care provider
- Imvamune® is not a treatment for monkeypox infection but could prevent someone from getting infected if timed appropriately between vaccination and exposure
- Limit close contact to people who are suspected or confirmed cases of monkeypox
 - Consider limiting the number of people you have close skin-to-skin contact with
 - Avoid touching blisters or rashes on another person
 - Talk to sexual partners about sexual health and use barriers such as gloves and condoms
 - Avoid sharing objects that come into contact with another person's body fluids such as toothbrushes, sex toys and drug use supplies
- Frequently disinfect commonly touched surfaces in environments that could be contaminated with the virus
 - Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces (such as door handles, countertops, and phones) and fabrics (such as clothing and bedding)
 - Standard household cleaners/disinfectants/detergents can be used to kill the virus on surfaces
 - Avoid touching bedding and laundry that has been in contact with someone who has monkeypox
- Practice healthy habits such as frequent hand hygiene, staying home when ill, using personal protective equipment (PPE) if you are caring for someone with monkeypox
- If you are caring for someone with monkeypox in your home:
 - Use personal protective equipment (PPE), including disposable gloves and mask
 - Encourage the person to cover their rash and blisters (use bandages, wear a long sleeve shirt and long pants) and to wear a mask when you are close to them.
 - Avoid skin-to-skin contact, including contact with blisters
 - Clean your hands with soap and water after each contact with the person who has monkeypox
 - Clean and frequently disinfect frequently touched surfaces

Where can I get more information?

- GNWT General Information (Monkeypox):
<https://www.hss.gov.nt.ca/en/services/monkeypox>
- GNWT Vaccine Information (Monkeypox):
<https://www.hss.gov.nt.ca/sites/hss/files/resources/monkeypox-vaccine.pdf>

- Alberta Health Services General Information (Monkeypox):
<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/topics/Page18034.aspx>
- Ontario Vaccine Information (Monkeypox):
https://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/emb/docs/Monkeypox_Imvamune_Guidance_HCP.pdf
- Public Health Agency of Canada General Information (Monkeypox):
<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/monkeypox.html>
- World Health Organization (WHO) Factsheets (Monkeypox):
<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/monkeypox>