

Monkeypox Fact Sheet

Last Updated July 6, 2022

What is monkeypox?

- Monkeypox is a viral infection usually found in certain animal species in central and western Africa. Human cases have usually been confined to those countries although small outbreaks have occurred sporadically outside this area.
- First identified in humans in 1970, monkeypox has similarities to the smallpox virus but is significantly less severe.

How many cases have there been and who is getting it?

- In the past several months an outbreak has been reported in Europe, particularly the United Kingdom, Spain, Germany, Portugal, and France. As of late June 2022, there have been over 5,500 cases worldwide.
- The US has diagnosed 605 cases to date, with the majority in California, New York, Illinois, and Florida. There have been 117 cases diagnosed in California and **42 probable and confirmed in Los Angeles**. For updated LA statistics, click here: <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/monkeypox/>.
- Although anyone who is exposed can get the virus, **100% of the cases in L.A. so far have been among gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men.**
- Infections are confirmed to be happening locally in Los Angeles.

What are the symptoms?

- Rash: The most prominent symptom is the rash which goes through several stages before healing. It can look like pimples, blisters, and scabs, sometimes with a central depression. Lesions can appear on the face, inside the mouth, and on other body parts like hands, feet, chest, abdomen, genitals, and anus.
- Fever, chills, exhaustion, headache, swollen lymph nodes.
- Sometimes people get a fever or swollen lymph nodes first. Others get a rash first. Still others only get a rash with no other symptoms.
- There have been zero deaths worldwide in this new outbreak. Most cases resolve on their own in 2–4 weeks without further treatment. Some people with sores report significant pain.
- Once infected, an individual is contagious until all lesions have fully healed, and fresh new skin appears in its place.

How are people catching monkeypox?

Monkeypox CAN be Spread by:	Monkeypox CANNOT be Spread by:
Direct skin-to-skin contact with rash or lesions	Casual conversations
Sexual/intimate contact, including kissing	Walking by someone with monkeypox, like in a grocery store
Living in a house and/or sharing a bed with someone	Touching items like doorknobs
Sharing towels or unwashed clothing	
Respiratory secretions through prolonged face-to-face interactions (the type that mainly happen with	

open mouth kissing, etc., when living with someone or caring for someone who has monkeypox)	
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How can I keep myself protected from monkeypox?

- Avoid close physical contact, both sexual and non-sexual, with people who have symptoms, sores, or rashes.
- Talk to your sexual partner/s about any recent illness, potential exposures, and any new sores or rashes.
- Use a condom for penetration sex. Internal monkeypox sores can be extremely painful.
- Avoid contact with contaminated materials including bedding, towels, and sex toys when possible.
- Wear at least gloves and a properly fitting N-95 mask if you must have close contact with someone who has symptoms or with potentially contaminated materials.
- Practice frequent hand washing and use of hand sanitizers as we would for COVID prevention.

What should I do if I get exposed to monkeypox or develop concerning symptoms?

- **ISOLATE:** Do not leave your home or place you're staying. Avoid close and direct physical contact—especially intimate contact—with anyone.
- **PROTECT:** If you must have contact with others, including healthcare workers, be sure all lesions are well-covered with bandages or cloth. Wear an N-95 mask any time you are closer than six-feet to anyone.
- **NOTIFY:** Reach out to your primary care provider immediately, describe your symptoms, and ask about next steps for care.

What treatment options are available?

- All existing treatments and vaccines were designed and approved for smallpox. However, early evidence shows effectiveness against monkeypox as well.
- **VACCINATION:** Jynneos, the vaccine in use currently, is available only through the Los Angeles Department of Public Health (LADPH) and, at this time, only to people with a known exposure. Unfortunately, there is not yet enough vaccine available in Los Angeles or in the US to allow us to vaccinate everyone who may be at risk. The federal government has committed to purchasing 2.5 million doses over the next six months, so we look forward to more vaccinations as supplies become available.
- **MEDICATION:** There is a medication available called tecovirimat (TPOXX), also designed for smallpox, that seems to improve monkeypox severity and shorten the illness, although data is quite limited. There is also limited safety data available, though nothing alarming has occurred so far. This medication is only available through the LADPH compassionate use program. This means it can only be used for very sick people who have a severe case of confirmed monkeypox. It cannot be given to anyone who wants it or who may have been exposed.