

# Monkeypox Factsheet and Recommendations

Monkeypox is a disease caused by infection with the monkeypox virus, closely related to the virus that causes smallpox. Monkeypox was first discovered in 1958 and is not a novel virus.

*Disclaimer: EH&S will be updating this Factsheet periodically as the science changes.*

*For the most updated information, visit the [CDC Monkeypox](#) and [Iowa Department of Public Health](#) websites*



## Symptoms:

**Usually appear one to two weeks after infection and can include:**

- Flu-like symptoms such as fever, headache, backache, muscle aches, swollen lymph nodes, chills, exhaustion, and respiratory symptoms (e.g., sore throat, nasal congestion, or cough).
- Rash that can look like pimples or blisters, which may be painful or itchy. The rash can first appear on the face, inside the mouth, and on other parts of the body, like the hands, feet, chest, genitals, or anus. The rash starts as flat red spots, then becomes firm, fluid-filled, raised bumps that turn into scabs that heal over several weeks.

**An individual may experience all or only a few symptoms;**

- Most people with monkeypox get a rash.
- Some people develop a rash before (or without) other symptoms.
- Some people develop a rash first, followed by other symptoms.
- Some people who first present with flu-like symptoms will develop a rash 1-4 days later.
- The illness typically lasts 2-4 weeks.

## How monkeypox Spreads

- Scientists are still researching if the virus can be spread when someone has no symptoms.
- Monkeypox may be more likely to affect people who have never been vaccinated against smallpox.
- Monkeypox spreads through direct contact with infectious rash, scabs, or body fluids. It can spread from when symptoms start until the rash has fully healed and a fresh layer of skin has formed.
- It is possible, but less likely, for transmission to occur through prolonged contact of abraded skin or mucus membranes with fomites such as clothing, towels, toiletries, or bedding that had previous contact with an infectious rash or bodily fluid.
- Respiratory secretions may also spread the virus during prolonged, face-to-face, or intimate physical contacts, such as kissing, cuddling, or sex.
- Pregnant individuals can spread the virus to their fetus through the placenta.

## Prevention



- Avoid close, [skin-to-skin contact](#) with people with a rash that looks like monkeypox.
- Talk to your partner about any recent illness and be aware of new or unexplained rashes on your body or your partner's body, including the mouth, genitals, and anus.
- Do not handle or touch the bedding, towels, or clothing of a person with monkeypox unless wearing appropriate personal protective equipment.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Use an EPA-registered [disinfectant](#) per the manufacturer's instructions, including concentration, contact time, and care and handling.
- When choosing a disinfectant, it is crucial to consider any potential health hazards and not mix disinfectants or add other chemicals.

## If you have been exposed

- People exposed to an infected person or animal should monitor their health for three weeks after exposure. You can go about your normal activities if you don't have any symptoms. Do not donate blood, cells, tissue, breast milk, semen, or organs during these three weeks.
- Consult your primary care physician regarding specific treatment, vaccination, and testing.



## Is monkeypox in Iowa?

Yes, Iowa has confirmed monkeypox cases.  
The [Iowa Department of Public Health](#) tracks this information.

## Resources



- **Monkeypox in the U.S. (2022, July 28).**  
<https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/response/2022/index.html>
- **Walter, K., & Malani, P. N. (2022). What Is Monkeypox? JAMA, 328(2), 222.**  
<https://doi.org/10.1001/jama.2022.10259>
- **IDPH-Monkeypox (2022).**  
<https://idph.iowa.gov/ehi/monkeypox>
- **Monkeypox. (2022, June 27).**  
<https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/monkeypox>
- **Safer Sex, Social Gatherings, and Monkeypox (2022)**  
<https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/sexualhealth/index.html>
- **Preventing Monkeypox Spread in Congregate Settings (2022, June 16).**  
<https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/specific-settings/congregate.html>