

Monkeypox Information

What is monkeypox?

Monkeypox is a rare disease caused by infection with the monkeypox virus. The monkeypox virus is part of the same family of viruses that causes smallpox.

Monkeypox symptoms are like smallpox symptoms, but milder. Monkeypox is usually not fatal and is not related to chickenpox.

How does monkeypox spread?

Monkeypox virus spreads when someone who has monkeypox has close contact with someone who doesn't. Close contact includes:

- Touching sores, bumps, or lesions
- Long term face-to-face interactions
- Sexual contact
- Touching bed linens, clothing, bandages, dishes, or furniture with lesion crusts or bodily fluids

It's most common for monkeypox to spread through close, intimate contact. Most cases today have spread through sex or other touching (cuddling) between adults who are gay, bisexual, and/or have sex with men, as well as gender diverse adults.

Click [HERE](#) to see the 2022 Outbreak Cases and Data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Signs and symptoms

- Symptoms often start within 3 weeks (21 days) of exposure but most often start between 7 and 14 days after exposure.
- If someone is exposed to monkeypox and has flu-like symptoms, a rash may appear within 1-4 days. Click [HERE](#) to see what this rash can look like.
- Monkeypox most often lasts 2-4 weeks and is contagious until all the scabs have fallen off. You are no longer contagious when a fresh layer of intact skin has formed underneath.
- Most people get better without medical treatment.

Click [HERE](#) to learn more about the signs and symptoms.

Can kids get monkeypox?

While children can get monkeypox, we are not seeing many cases right now. Children and teens who do get monkeypox may have more severe symptoms than adults.

Exposure

What if my child has been exposed?

Call your child's doctor to talk about vaccine options. If your child is vaccinated within 4 days of being exposed, it may help them not get sick. If they get the vaccine between 4 and 14 days after being exposed, it can help prevent severe illness. Click [HERE](#) for information about where to get vaccinated.



Testing at Children's Hospital Colorado

- Anyone with symptoms of monkeypox should call their doctor. Most clinics can obtain specimens for monkeypox testing. Please call first to ask about testing.
- If your child's doctor is at Children's Hospital Colorado, the clinic can obtain specimens for monkeypox testing.
- If your child does not have a doctor and needs to be checked, visit an Urgent Care or Emergency Department at one of Children's Hospital Colorado locations. Click [HERE](#) to find the location closest to you.
- Before going to the doctor, cover any rash with long sleeves, pants, or a bandage. Your child should wear a well-fitting mask over their nose and mouth if possible.

Testing

If you or your child are having a medical emergency, go to the emergency room right away.

Who should be tested?

- Right now, testing is only available if a person has a rash, sores, or bumps that look like monkeypox.
- If you or your child think you have monkeypox or have had close personal contact with someone who has monkeypox, take precautions and call your doctor.
- Before your doctor's visit, cover any rash with long sleeves, pants, or a bandage. Your child should wear a well-fitting mask over their nose and mouth if possible.

What should I do if I have symptoms?

- The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) recommends people with monkeypox-like [symptoms](#) talk to a doctor and stay home until they find out if they have monkeypox.
- People can bring this [document](#) to their medical visit.
- Before you come to the doctor's visit, cover any rash with long sleeves, pants, or a bandage. Your child should wear a well-fitting mask over their nose and mouth if possible.

Should a child, parent, or caregiver with a rash get tested for monkeypox?

- Children and adults can have a rash and fever for many of reasons, including hand foot and mouth disease, chickenpox, and herpes simplex virus (sores in or around the mouth). If a person without a known exposure to monkeypox has a fever and rash, they should be seen by their doctor.

What should I do while I wait for my test results?

- Isolate at home and stay away from other people and pets until you have been told your monkeypox test results are negative.
- Don't share personal items (eating utensils, cups, towels, bedding, clothes).
- Use a separate bathroom.
- Wash laundry separately.
- Clean and disinfect home surfaces. Click [HERE](#) for more information.
- Wash your hands.
- Wear a well-fitting mask when you're around other people or pets.

What if I test positive?

- Isolate at home and stay away from other people and pets until your symptoms are gone (rash has fully healed, scabs have fallen off, and a new layer of skin has formed).
- Don't share personal items (eating utensils, cups, towels, bedding, clothes), use a separate bathroom, wash laundry separately, clean and disinfect home surfaces, wash your hands, and wear a well-fitting mask when you are around other people or pets.
- Follow CDPHE recommendations for home isolation found [HERE](#).
- If you must leave home for an emergency or medical care, cover the rash with clothing, gloves, or bandages, wear a well-fitting mask, and avoid public transportation.

See additional CDPHE guidance: [What to do if you have monkeypox](#)

See additional CDC guidance: [What to do if you are sick](#)

Vaccines

Who can get vaccinated?

People 15 years and older who meet vaccine eligibility criteria can be vaccinated. Parents and guardians of children younger than 15 who need the vaccine should call their child's doctor or local public health agency.

Click [HERE](#) for a list of local agencies in Colorado.

Children's Hospital Colorado and other CDPHE-hosted clinics and certain doctors in Colorado can vaccinate eligible people with a scheduled appointment. Click [HERE](#) for information.

Parental/guardian consent is needed for anyone under 18 years old to get the vaccine. Minors aged 15 to 17 must also sign a release to get the vaccine.



Who is currently qualified for vaccination?

- Anyone (any sexual orientation or gender identity) who has had close physical contact with someone who has had monkeypox in the last 14 days.
- Anyone (any sexual orientation or gender identity) who:
 - Has multiple or anonymous sexual partners
 - Has close physical contact with other people in a venue where anonymous or group sex may happen
 - Was diagnosed with gonorrhea or syphilis in the past six months
 - Is living with HIV
 - Already uses or is eligible for HIV PrEP (medication to prevent HIV, e.g., Truvada, Descovy, or Apretude)
 - Engages in commercial and/or transactional sex (e.g., sex in exchange for money, shelter, food, and other goods or needs).
- Anyone (any sexual orientation or gender identity) identified by medical professionals as a known high-risk contact of someone who has monkeypox.
- Anyone who meets these criteria should talk with their doctor to see if the vaccine is right for them. Visit CDPHE's website for more information about who is qualified: <https://cdphe.colorado.gov/diseases-a-to-z/monkeypox-vaccine>

Talk with your child's doctor and/or local public health before getting vaccinated.

Can my child get the monkeypox vaccine before they are exposed?

Colorado has [expanded its vaccination criteria](#) to provide protection to Coloradans before they have high-risk exposures to monkeypox, as well as those who have been exposed. Talk with your child's doctor to see if the vaccine is right for them.

Treatment

- There is no treatment made just for monkeypox, but drugs and vaccines that help treat and protect against smallpox can be used against for monkeypox.
- The type of treatment may depend on how likely the person is to develop severe disease.
- Most people with monkeypox fully recover within 2 to 4 weeks without needing medical treatment.

Resources

You and your child

- [How to Protect Yourself from Monkeypox](#) (CDC)
- [Pets and Monkeypox](#) (CDC)
- [What you need to know about monkeypox if you are a teen or young adult](#) (available in Spanish) (CDC)
- [Home Disinfection](#) (CDC)
- [Monkeypox Vaccination](#) (CDC)

The information presented is intended for educational purposes only. It is not intended to take the place of your personal doctor's advice and is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease. The information should not be used in place of a visit, call or consultation or advice of your doctor or other health care provider.

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