

6/10/22

Press Releases

RIDOH Announces Probable Case of Monkeypox; Risk to Rhode Islanders Remains Low

The Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) today announced the first probable monkeypox case in a male in his thirties and a resident of Providence County. The person has tested positive for an orthopox virus, and confirmation for monkeypox is pending testing at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). This case is believed to be related to travel to Massachusetts.

RIDOH is conducting contact tracing to identify individuals who may have been exposed to the patient while he was infectious. Contacts will be monitored by RIDOH for three weeks after their last day of exposure. This contact tracing approach is the most appropriate given the nature and transmission of the virus. The individual is hospitalized and in good condition.

To protect patient privacy, no further information will be provided. RIDOH is identifying and monitoring the patient's close contacts. No additional positive cases have been detected in Rhode Island.

"While monkeypox is certainly a concern, the risk to Rhode Islanders remains low – even with this finding. Monkeypox is a known – and remains an exceedingly uncommon – disease in the United States. Fortunately, there is a vaccine for monkeypox that can be given before or after exposure to help prevent infection," said Interim Health Director James McDonald, MD, MPH. "RIDOH continues to engage in active case finding and we have been communicating the latest information with healthcare providers so that they have the information they need to help us 'identify, isolate, and inform'."

Monkeypox is not known to spread easily among humans; transmission generally does not occur through casual contact. Human-to-human transmission occurs primarily through direct contact with body fluids, including the rash caused by monkeypox. Transmission might also occur through prolonged, close, face-to-face contact. The time from someone becoming infected to showing symptoms for monkeypox is usually 7-14 days but can range from 5-21 days. Infected people are not contagious before they show symptoms.

Symptoms of monkeypox include fever, headache, muscle aches, exhaustion, and swollen lymph nodes. Infected people develop a rash, often beginning on the face then spreading to other parts of the body, that turns into fluid-filled bumps (pox). These pox lesions eventually dry up, scab over, and fall off. The illness typically lasts 2-4 weeks. Currently, there is no proven, safe treatment for monkeypox, though the limited evidence available indicates that smallpox treatments may be useful. Most people recover with no treatment.

Anyone who has symptoms of monkeypox should call their healthcare provider before going to the office for an appointment. Let them know you are concerned about possible monkeypox infection so they can take precautions to ensure that others are not exposed.

CDC is also tracking multiple clusters of monkeypox that have been reported in recent weeks in several countries that don't normally report monkeypox, including Portugal, Spain, and the United Kingdom. While anyone who has been in close contact with a confirmed or suspected monkeypox case can acquire monkeypox, people who have recently traveled to a country where monkeypox has been reported or men who have sex with other men are currently at a higher risk for monkeypox exposure. It is important to avoid stigmatizing any groups that may be considered at higher risk of exposure to the disease.

Anyone, regardless of sexual orientation, can spread monkeypox through contact with body fluids, monkeypox sores, or shared items (such as clothing and bedding) that have been contaminated with fluids or sores of a person with monkeypox. Monkeypox virus can also spread between people through respiratory droplets typically in a close setting, such as the same household or a healthcare setting. Common household disinfectants can kill the

Social Gatherings, Safer Sex and Monkeypox

Monkeypox is a disease caused by a virus not commonly seen in the United States. While we work to contain the current outbreak and study the virus, we want you to have information so you can make informed choices when you are in spaces or situations where monkeypox could be spread through close, intimate contact or during sex. There is a lot we still need to learn about monkeypox, and we will update this information as we learn more on www.cdc.gov/monkeypox.

What is monkeypox?

Monkeypox is a disease that can make you sick, including a rash, which may look like pimples or blisters, often with an earlier flu-like illness. Monkeypox can spread to anyone through close, personal, often skin-to-skin contact including:

- Direct contact with monkeypox rash, sores, or scabs from a person with monkeypox. We believe this is currently the most common way that monkeypox is spreading in the U.S.
- Contact with objects, fabrics (clothing, bedding, or towels), and surfaces that have been used by someone with monkeypox.
- Contact with respiratory secretions, through kissing and other face-to-face contact.

This contact can happen when you have sex including:

- Oral, anal, and vaginal sex or touching the genitals (penis, testicles, labia, and vagina) or anus (butt) of a person with monkeypox.
- Hugging, massage, and kissing.
- Touching fabrics and objects during sex that were used by a person with monkeypox and that have not been disinfected, such as bedding, towels, fetish gear, and sex toys.

What are the symptoms of monkeypox?

- Monkeypox symptoms usually start within 2 weeks of exposure to the virus.
 - The first symptoms might be like the flu, such as fever, headache, muscle aches and backache, swollen lymph nodes, chills, or exhaustion.
 - Within 1-3 days of these symptoms beginning, people develop a rash or sores.
- The rash or sores may be located on or near the genitals or anus but could also be on other areas like the hands, feet, chest, or face.
 - The sores will go through several stages, including scabs, before healing.
 - The sores can look like pimples or blisters and may be painful or itchy.
 - Sores may be inside the body, including the mouth, vagina, or anus.



You may experience all or only a few of these symptoms. Most people with monkeypox will get the rash or sores. Some people have reported developing the rash or sores before (or without) the flu-like symptoms.

Monkeypox can be spread from the time symptoms start until all sores, including scabs, have healed and a fresh layer of skin has formed. This can take several weeks.

What are researchers investigating?

- If the virus can be spread when someone has no symptoms.
- If the virus could be present in semen (cum), vaginal fluids, and fecal matter (poop).

How can a person lower the chance of getting monkeypox at places like raves, parties, clubs, and festivals?

When thinking about what to do, seek out information from trusted sources like the local health department. Second, consider how much close, personal, skin-to-skin contact is likely to occur at the event you plan to attend. If you feel sick or have any rashes or sores, do not attend any gathering, and see a healthcare provider.

- Festivals, events, and concerts where attendees are fully clothed and unlikely to share skin-to-skin contact are safer. However, attendees should be mindful of activities (like kissing) that might spread monkeypox.
- A rave, party, or club where there is minimal clothing and where there is direct, personal, often skin-to-skin contact has some risk. Avoid any rashes or sores you see on others and consider minimizing skin-to-skin contact when possible.
- Enclosed spaces, such as back rooms, saunas, or sex clubs, where there is minimal or no clothing and where intimate sexual contact occurs have a higher likelihood of spreading monkeypox.



How can a person lower their risk during sex?

Talk to your partner about any recent illness and be aware of new or unexplained sores or rashes on your body or your partner's body, including the genitals and anus. If you or your partner have recently been sick, currently feel sick, or have a new or an unexplained rash or sores, do not have sex and see a healthcare provider. This is always a good plan, even if monkeypox isn't in your area.

If you or a partner has monkeypox, the best way to protect yourself and others is to not have sex of any kind (oral, anal, vaginal) and not kiss or touch each other's bodies while you are sick, especially any rash or sores. Do not share things like towels, fetish gear, sex toys, and toothbrushes.

If you or your partner have (or think you might have) monkeypox and you decide to have sex, consider the following to reduce the chance of spreading the virus:

- Have virtual sex with no in-person contact.
- Masturbate together at a distance of at least 6 feet, without touching each other and without touching any rash or sores.
- Consider having sex with your clothes on or covering areas where rash or sores are present, reducing as much skin-to-skin contact as possible.
- Avoid kissing.
- Remember to wash your hands, fetish gear, sex toys and any fabrics (bedding, towels, clothing) after having sex.
- Limit your number of partners to avoid opportunities for monkeypox to spread.

What should a person do if they have a new or unexplained rash, sores, or other symptoms?

- Avoid sex or being intimate with anyone until you have been checked out by a healthcare provider. If you don't have a provider or health insurance, visit a public health clinic near you.
- When you see a healthcare provider, remind them that this virus is circulating in the area.
- Avoid gatherings, especially if they involve close, personal, skin-to-skin contact.
- Think about the people you have had close, personal, or sexual contact within the last 21 days, including people you met through dating apps. You might be asked to share this information if you have received a monkeypox diagnosis, to help stop the spread.

Social Gatherings, Safer Sex, and Monkeypox

Monkeypox is a disease caused by a virus not commonly seen in the United States. While we work to contain the current outbreak and study the virus, we want you to have information so you can make informed choices when you are in spaces or situations where monkeypox could be spread through close, intimate contact or during sex. There is a lot we still need to learn about monkeypox, and we will update this information as we learn more.

What is monkeypox?

Monkeypox is a disease that can make you sick, including a rash, which may look like pimples or blisters, often with an earlier flu-like illness. Monkeypox can spread to anyone through close, personal, often skin-to-skin contact including:

- Direct contact with monkeypox rash, sores, or scabs from a person with monkeypox. We believe this is currently the most common way that monkeypox is spreading in the U.S.
- Contact with objects, fabrics (clothing, bedding, or towels), and surfaces that have been used by someone with monkeypox.
- Contact with respiratory secretions, through kissing and other face-to-face contact.

This contact can happen when you have sex including:

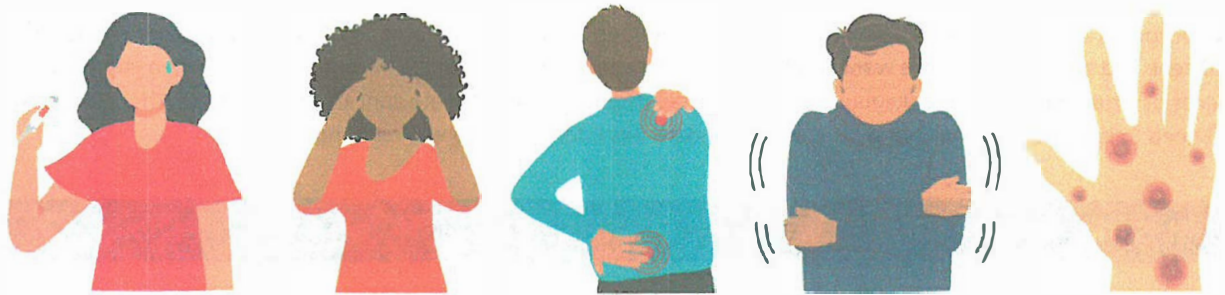
- Oral, anal, and vaginal sex or touching the genitals (penis, testicles, labia, and vagina) or anus (butt) of a person with monkeypox.
- Hugging, massage, and kissing
- Touching fabrics and objects during sex that were used by a person with monkeypox and that have not been disinfected, such as bedding, towels, fetish gear, and sex toys.

What are the symptoms of monkeypox?

- Monkeypox symptoms usually start within 2 weeks of exposure to the virus.
 - The first symptoms might be like the flu, such as fever, headache, muscle aches and backache, swollen lymph nodes, chills, or exhaustion.
 - Within 1-3 days of these symptoms beginning, people develop a rash or sores.
- The rash or sores may be located on or near the genitals or anus but could also be on other areas like the hands, feet, chest, or face.
 - The sores will go through several stages, including scabs, before healing.
 - The sores can look like pimples or blisters and may be painful or itchy.
 - Sores may be inside the body, including the mouth, vagina, or anus.

You may experience all or only a few of these symptoms. Most people with monkeypox will get the rash or sores. Some people have reported developing the rash or sores before (or without) the flu-like symptoms.

Monkeypox can be spread from the time symptoms start until all sores, including scabs, have healed and a fresh layer of skin has formed. This can take several weeks.



What are researchers investigating?

- If the virus can be spread when someone has no symptoms.
- If the virus could be present in semen (cum), vaginal fluids, and fecal matter (poop).

How can a person lower the chance of getting monkeypox at places like raves, parties, clubs, and festivals?

When thinking about what to do, seek out information from trusted sources like the local health department. Second, consider how much close, personal, skin-to-skin contact is likely to occur at the event you plan to attend. If you feel sick or have any rashes or sores, do not attend any gathering, and see a healthcare provider.

- Festivals, events, and concerts where attendees are fully clothed and unlikely to share skin-to-skin contact are safer. However, attendees should be mindful of activities (like kissing) that might spread monkeypox.
- A rave, party, or club where there is minimal clothing and where there is direct, personal, often skin-to-skin contact has some risk. Avoid any rashes or sores you see on others and consider minimizing skin-to-skin contact when possible.
- Enclosed spaces, such as back rooms, saunas, or sex clubs, where there is minimal or no clothing and where intimate sexual contact occurs have a higher likelihood of spreading monkeypox.



How can a person lower their risk during sex?

Talk to your partner about any recent illness and be aware of new or unexplained sores or rashes on your body or your partner's body, including the genitals and anus. If you or your partner have recently been sick, currently feel sick, or have a new or an unexplained rash or sores, do not have sex and see a healthcare provider. This is always a good plan, even if monkeypox isn't in your area.

If you or a partner has monkeypox, the best way to protect yourself and others is to not have sex of any kind (oral, anal, vaginal) and not kiss or touch each other's bodies while you are sick, especially any rash or sores. Do not share things like towels, fetish gear, sex toys, and toothbrushes.



If you or your partner have (or think you might have) monkeypox and you decide to have sex, consider the following to reduce the chance of spreading the virus:

- Have virtual sex with no in-person contact.
- Masturbate together at a distance of at least 6 feet, without touching each other and without touching any rash or sores.
- Consider having sex with your clothes on or covering areas where rash or sores are present, reducing as much skin-to-skin contact as possible.
- Avoid kissing.
- Remember to wash your hands, fetish gear, sex toys and any fabrics (bedding, towels, clothing) after having sex
- Limit your number of partners to avoid opportunities for monkeypox to spread.

What should a person do if they have a new or unexplained rash, sores, or other symptoms?

- Avoid sex or being intimate with anyone until you have been checked out by a healthcare provider. If you don't have a provider or health insurance, visit a public health clinic near you.
- When you see a healthcare provider, remind them that this virus is circulating in the area.
- Avoid gatherings, especially if they involve close, personal, skin-to-skin contact.
- Think about the people you have had close, personal, or sexual contact within the last 21 days, including people you met through dating apps. You might be asked to share this information if you have received a monkeypox diagnosis, to help stop the spread.

Download or Print

 [Learn about social gatherings, safer sex, and monkeypox.](#)  [205 KB, 2 pages]

Page last reviewed: June 8, 2022

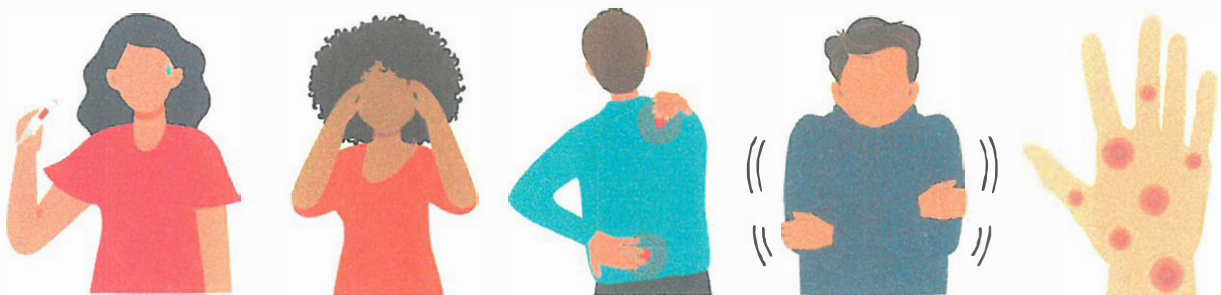
Monkeypox Facts for People Who are Sexually Active

Monkeypox: Get the Facts

- Monkeypox is a rare disease caused by the monkeypox virus
- Monkeypox can make you sick including a rash or sores (pox), often with an earlier flu-like illness
- Monkeypox can spread to anyone through close, personal, often skin-to-skin contact including:
 - Direct contact with monkeypox rash, sores, or scabs
 - Contact with objects, fabrics (clothing, bedding, or towels), and surfaces that have been used by someone with monkeypox
 - Through respiratory droplets or oral fluids from a person with monkeypox
- This contact can happen during intimate sexual contact including:
 - Oral, anal, and vaginal sex or touching the genitals or anus of a person with monkeypox
 - Hugging, massage, kissing, or talking closely
 - Touching fabrics and objects during sex that were used by a person with monkeypox, such as bedding, towels and sex toys
- We know the virus can be spread in fluid or pus from monkeypox sores, and are trying to better understand if virus could be present in semen, vaginal fluids or other body fluids



What Are the Symptoms?



- Early flu-like symptoms of monkeypox can include:
 - Fever
 - Headache
 - Muscle aches and backache
 - Swollen lymph nodes

- Chills
- Exhaustion
- A rash or sores, sometimes located on or near the genitals or anus, but sometimes in other areas like the hands, feet, chest, or face – sores will go through several stages before healing
- Sores may be inside the body, including the mouth, vagina, or anus
- Some people experience a rash or sores first, followed by other symptoms and some only experience a rash or sores
- Monkeypox can be spread from the time symptoms start until all sores have healed and a fresh layer of skin has formed – this can take several weeks

If You Have a New or Unexplained Rash, Sores, or Other Symptoms...

- See your healthcare provider – if you don't have a provider or health insurance, visit a public health clinic near you
- When you see a healthcare provider for possible monkeypox, remind them that this virus is circulating in the community
- Avoid sex or being intimate with anyone until you have been checked out



If You or Your Partner Have Monkeypox...

- Follow the treatment and prevention recommendations of your healthcare provider
- Avoid sex or being intimate with anyone until all your sores have healed and you have a fresh layer of skin formed.

Download or Print

 [Learn monkeypox facts for people who are sexually active.](#) [79 KB, 1 page]

Page last reviewed: June 8, 2022