



# MONKEYPOX

## Isolation Instructions for People with Monkeypox

This guidance is for people who have been diagnosed with monkeypox. It is also for people who are suspected of having monkeypox until they get a negative result from their test. Different guidance is available for people in healthcare settings or congregate settings, such as correctional facilities and homeless shelters.

**It is important to follow this guidance to protect others and reduce the spread of monkeypox.**

### HOW MONKEYPOX SPREADS

Monkeypox can spread by:

- Direct skin-to-skin contact with the sores or scabs from a person with monkeypox.
- Direct contact with the body fluids or respiratory secretions from a person with monkeypox, such as drainage from skin sores or saliva that was in contact with mouth sores.
- Getting stuck/punctured by a sharp object (such as a needle) that has touched the sores or body fluids of a person with monkeypox.
- Touching materials (such as bedding, towels, clothing) that touched the sores or body fluids from a person with monkeypox and have not been cleaned. (Note: the CDC states that the risk of getting monkeypox this way is low).

A person with monkeypox can spread it to others from the time symptoms start until the rash has healed, scabs have fallen off, and there is a new layer of skin. This usually takes 2 to 4 weeks.

A pregnant person with monkeypox can spread the virus to their fetus through the placenta. The virus can also be spread to the baby by close contact during and after birth.

For more information see, Monkeypox FAQs available at [ph.lacounty.gov/monkeypox](https://ph.lacounty.gov/monkeypox)

### WHEN TO ISOLATE

#### You should isolate at home if:

- It is suspected that you have monkeypox, until a doctor has ruled it out.
- You have monkeypox, until you meet the criteria to resume limited or normal activities as stated below.

Stay home unless you need to leave the house for an emergency or to see a doctor

#### You can resume limited activities outside the home when ALL of the following criteria are met:

- You have not had a fever or respiratory symptoms for at least 48 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicine; AND
- You have had no new lesions appear for at least 48 hours; AND
- Any lesions that cannot be covered are fully healed (i.e., scabs have fallen off and a fresh layer of skin has formed at the lesion sites).

Once you meet all of these criteria, you may resume limited activities outside the home as long as they do not involve close physical contact with others or non-essential visits to settings of concern (see box below). You should follow the precautions described in *Precautions to take outside the home* below).



### **Returning to work**

If you meet all of the above criteria to resume limited activities outside the home, you can return to in-person work as long\* as:

- Your work does not involve direct physical care or contact with others, e.g., massage therapy, estheticians, sex work;
- You do not work in a setting of concern (*see box below*); AND
- You are unable to work virtually.

\*Before returning to work check with your employer as there may be additional requirements per Cal/OSHA or licensing or certification bodies.

If you do not meet these return-to-work criteria, **you should not return to in-person work** until you meet the criteria to resume normal activities (*see below*).

### **Returning to school**

Children 8 years of age or older who meet all of the above criteria to resume limited activities outside the home, may return to in-person school and other settings (before/after school programs, etc.) as long as they do not participate in any activities that involve close physical contact with others, such as contact sports.

Children younger than 8 years of age should not return to in person childcare or school until they meet the criteria to resume normal activities (see below).

### **Settings of Concern**

Settings of concern include:

- Homeless shelters, migrant shelters, emergency shelters, and residential drug treatment facilities
- Healthcare settings
- State and local correctional facilities and detention centers
- Long-term care, adult and senior care facilities, and in-home services involving physical care
- Childcare and preschool settings that provide care for children from infancy through pre-school, assuming that there will be close physical contact for diapering, toileting, feeding, hygiene and general interaction
- K-12 schools and other settings (before/after school programs) that provide care for school-aged children younger than age 8 or older children whose care requires close physical contact, if job duties require direct physical contact with such children

### **You can resume normal activities when:**

- All your skin lesions have healed (i.e., scabs have fallen off and a fresh layer of skin has formed at the lesion sites) AND
- Any other symptoms, including fever have been gone for at least 48 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicine.

*Note about sex:* There may be a risk of passing monkeypox to a sex partner even after your skin lesions have healed. This is because the virus may remain in semen and other genital excretions. If you have sex after ending isolation, until we know more, it is recommended that you use condoms for 12 weeks.



### INSTRUCTIONS

#### Precautions at home

Follow these instructions to protect others in the home until you have met the criteria to resume normal activities.

- Keep skin lesions covered (see *skin lesions* below).
- Avoid close contact with people and animals you live with
  - Sleep in a separate room if possible.
  - Use a separate bathroom if possible. If not, clean and disinfect it yourself and follow the guidance on the CDC's webpage [Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Home, Workplace, and Other Community Settings](#).
  - Minimize the time spent in the same room with others.  
If you need to spend time in the same room as someone in your household, cover all skin lesions with clothes, gloves and/or bandages as appropriate and minimize any physical contact. In addition, you, and the person you are in the room with (if over 2 years of age) should wear a well-fitting mask or respirator when you are in close contact (e.g., within 6 feet) for more than a brief encounter. It is particularly important to try to avoid close prolonged contact with young children and people who are pregnant, breastfeeding, or immunosuppressed, or people who have a history of atopic dermatitis or eczema as they may be at higher risk of serious illness.
- Avoid hugging; cuddling, massaging; kissing; sleeping in the same bed; having oral, anal, and vaginal sex; or touching the genitals or anus of others or other close skin-to-skin contact with other people. Do not share items you have used with other people or animals, including bedding, towels, clothes, utensils, cups, and electronics among other items, unless they have been cleaned and disinfected (see below).
- Launder or disinfect items that have been worn or handled and clean and disinfect surfaces that have been touched by a skin lesion. Clean them yourself if possible.
- Try to avoid contaminating upholstered furniture and other porous materials that cannot be laundered by placing coversheets, waterproof mattress covers, blankets, or tarps over these surfaces.
- Clean your hands frequently throughout the day, especially after direct contact with lesions. Other household members should also clean their hands frequently. Use soap and water for 20 seconds or hand sanitizers that contain at least 60% alcohol.

#### Reduce the risk of spreading the lesions to different parts of your body

- Avoid use of contact lenses to prevent spreading the infection to your eyes.
- Avoid shaving areas of the body that have the skin lesions/rash.

#### Cleaning, disinfection, and waste disposal

- **Laundry** (e.g., bedding, towels, clothing) may be washed in a standard washing machine with warm water and detergent. Soiled laundry should not be shaken or handled in a way that may spread infectious particles.
  - If other people must handle your unwashed laundry, to reduce their risk of exposure, they should wear disposable gloves and a well-fitting mask and cover any exposed skin that may come in contact with the unwashed laundry.



# MONKEYPOX

## Isolation Instructions for People with Monkeypox

- **Clean and disinfect frequently touched items.** If other people must do this, they should wear, at a minimum, disposable gloves and a respirator
  - **Dishes and eating utensils** should be washed in a dishwasher or by hand with warm water and dish soap.
  - **Contaminated surfaces** should be cleaned and disinfected. Many standard household cleaning/disinfectants may be used – see the [EPA website](#) for a list of EPA-registered disinfectants.
    - Read the manufacturer’s directions; make sure it is the right product for your surface.
    - Pre-clean the surface with soap and water if the directions mention pre-cleaning or if the surface is visibly dirty. Dirt can keep the disinfectant from working.
    - Follow the contact time instructions; the surface should remain wet for the amount of time indicated to ensure the product is effective. Reapply if necessary.
- **Trash/Waste:** Have a lined trash can in the room where you are isolating for disposal of gloves, bandages, paper towels and other general trash. Seal the bag and dispose of in the regular trash. Wear gloves when handling and disposing of trash.

See CDC [Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Home, Workplace, and Other Community Settings](#) for more information and tips about cleaning during and after monkeypox.

### Skin lesions

**Cover unhealed skin lesions as much as possible if you live with or are in contact with others.**

- Cover lesions with clothing, or a piece of gauze held in place with first aid tape or a semi-permeable bandage (one that allows air to flow through, but not fluids), e.g., Tegaderm™ with a gauze pad or similar.
- Wear gloves to cover lesions on hands.
- Prevent lesions from touching other people or items that may be used by others.
- Follow healthcare provider recommendations on the care of lesions. Seek medical attention if there are any signs of a secondary bacterial infection, including fever, pus, or increasing warmth, redness, and swelling in the skin surrounding the lesions.
- Change bandages yourself if possible - wear disposable gloves and wash your hands as soon as you have disposed of the gloves. If you need help cleaning or bandaging the lesions, the person helping should wear, at a minimum, disposable gloves, long sleeves, and a well-fitting mask or respirator. Any clothing that contacts the lesions during bandage changes should be immediately laundered. See above for disposing of contaminated waste (e.g., bandages, gloves).

### Masks and respirators

**Wear a respirator or well-fitting mask at all times when you are in contact with other people until all skin lesions have healed and other symptoms have been resolved for at least 48 hours.**

It is possible for the monkeypox virus to spread through respiratory secretions. To be safe, it is recommended that you wear a well-fitting mask or respirator around others for as long as you are infectious. In addition, household members should also wear a well-fitting mask or respirator if they will be in close contact with you. Respirators such as N95, KN95 and KF94 offer the best protection.



# MONKEYPOX

## Isolation Instructions for People with Monkeypox

### Pets

It is possible that pets could become infected or contaminated with the virus through close contact with an infected person and can spread the virus to others. Avoid close contact with animals or pets and follow guidance on the CDC webpage [Pets in the Home](#) if you have a pet. Close contact includes petting, cuddling, hugging, kissing, licking, sharing sleeping areas, and sharing food.

If you need to walk your pet outside, make sure the skin lesions/rash on your body is completely covered by clothing, gloves, and/or bandages, and wear a well-fitting mask while you are outside of your home.

### Precautions to take outside the home

If you are isolating at home but you need to leave for an emergency or to see a doctor:

- Drive yourself if you can. If public transit or ride share is your only option, try to avoid busy transit times. Keep as much distance as possible between yourself and open the windows
- Cover any unhealed lesions with clothing or bandages (see *Skin lesions* above)
- Always wear a well-fitting respirator or mask when in contact with other people (see *Masks and respirators* above).
- Wash hands frequently with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer and avoid direct contact with lesions.

If you meet all of the *criteria* to resume limited activities outside your home:

- Follow the precautions listed above
- Do not participate in activities that involve close physical contact (e.g., massage, skin care, etc) or make non-essential visits to settings of concern (see box above)
- Do not share towels or other personal objects with others
- Avoid crowded settings such as bars, clubs, parties, saunas, and bath houses
- Avoid direct skin-to-skin contact or intimate physical contact with others including kissing, cuddling, and sexual contact.

### Tell your close contacts they may have been exposed

Contact your sex partners and any people you had very close, intimate and/or prolonged contact with since your symptoms started. Do this as soon as possible so they can consider getting [vaccinated](#) (if they have not already been vaccinated for monkeypox). Getting vaccinated after exposure may prevent monkeypox or make the illness less severe. They can also look out for any symptoms of monkeypox.

### Answer calls from Public Health

Please answer calls from Public Health. They will be in touch to ask you about your activities before and after you developed symptoms. This is to try to find out how you may have been exposed to monkeypox and to help to identify other people who may have been exposed. They will also ask you whether you needed treatment or if you had to go to the hospital.



# MONKEYPOX

## Isolation Instructions for People with Monkeypox

### MORE INFORMATION

If you have questions, visit the [ph.lacounty.gov/monkeypox](https://ph.lacounty.gov/monkeypox) or the CDC monkeypox webpage [When you are sick](#) for more information.

If you do not have a provider or have questions about isolation, call the Public Health Call Center at 1-833-540-0473 - open daily 8:00 am to 8:30 pm.

