

# Guidance for People Who Have Been Exposed to Monkeypox

## 1. What should I do if I have been exposed to someone with monkeypox?

- **Monitor your health.** People who develop monkeypox usually get symptoms 7-14 days (and up to 21 days) after being exposed. If you develop symptoms (see below), be prepared to isolate yourself from others.
- **Get vaccinated** if Public Health contacts you directly or if you are eligible for vaccination. Getting the monkeypox vaccine soon after exposure – ideally within 4 days but up to 14 days after – can help prevent you from becoming infected with the monkeypox virus or, if you become infected, may make your infection less severe. Right now, while the vaccine supply remains limited, it is being prioritized for people who have a known [high-or intermediate-risk exposure](#) to a known case or who are at higher risk of exposure.
  - Public Health is conducting contact tracing of all people with monkeypox. If you are identified as having [high- or intermediate-risk contact](#) with someone with monkeypox (as defined by CDC and confirmed by Public Health) Public Health will contact you directly to offer monkeypox vaccination. Public Health will also contact you if you were identified as being present at an event/venue where there was a high risk of exposure through skin-to-skin exposure or sexual contact to individual(s) with monkeypox. Please answer calls from Public Health.
  - If you meet any of the eligibility criteria for people at higher risk of monkeypox exposure, get vaccinated. See [Monkeypox Vaccine Availability-Eligibility Criteria](#).

## 2. What are the signs and symptoms should I look out for?

The most common symptom of monkeypox is a rash that may:

- Look like bumps, pimples, blisters, or scabs and will go through several stages before healing. Generally, the rash starts as red, flat spots, and then become bumps. Those bumps can then become filled with fluid which turns to pus. The bumps then crust into a scab.
- Be on or near the genitals (penis, testicles, labia, and vagina), anus (butthole), mouth, or other areas like the hands, feet, chest, and face.
- Spread over the body, or it may be limited to one area. There may be just a few bumps or blisters.
- Be painful and/or itchy. Some people have severe pain, especially if the rash is inside their mouth or anus.

In addition to the rash, people may also develop flu-like symptoms. These can appear 1-4 days before the rash starts or after the rash starts. They include fever/chills, swollen lymph nodes, exhaustion, muscle aches, and headache.

### **3. How long is someone with monkeypox contagious?**

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

Scientists are still studying whether people with monkeypox can spread the infection when they have no symptoms, how often monkeypox is spread, when a person with monkeypox might be more likely to spread it through respiratory droplets, and any other types of interactions or behaviors that may put people at increased risk. Public Health will continue to share information as we learn more.

### **4. Do I have to avoid any activities?**

As long as you do not have any symptoms of monkeypox (see above), you can continue your routine daily activities (e.g., go to work, school). However, you should not donate blood, cells, tissue, breast milk, semen, or organs during your 21-day symptom monitoring period.

### **5. What should I do if I develop signs or symptoms of monkeypox?**

See a healthcare provider as soon as possible if you develop a new rash, sores, or skin lesions on any part of your body and/or develop flu-like symptoms. Be sure to tell them about your exposure to monkeypox. Cover your rash and wear a well-fitting mask when you go to see the provider.

If you don't have a provider or health insurance, call the Public Health Call Center at 1-833-540-0473 (open daily 8am to 8:30pm). If you have a rash, you can also access services at Public Health's Sexual Health Clinics (see schedule [here](#)).

If you have a rash that the healthcare provider is concerned may be monkeypox, they will test you. They will rub a swab against sores on your skin, or parts of your rash, and send the swabs to a lab for monkeypox testing.

Until you know you don't have monkeypox, you should take steps to reduce the risk of spreading the infection by staying away from others. Follow [Monkeypox Isolation Instructions](#).

### **6. What should I do if I am diagnosed with monkeypox?**

If you have been diagnosed with monkeypox, you should isolate to protect others. Follow the [Isolation Instructions for People with Monkeypox](#) which are available in several languages at [ph.lacounty.gov/monkeypox](http://ph.lacounty.gov/monkeypox).

Contact your sex partners and people you have had very close, intimate and/or prolonged contact with since the start of your symptoms. Do this as soon as possible so they can get vaccinated (if eligible) and can look out for any symptoms of monkeypox.

Please answer calls from Public Health. They will be in touch to ask you about your exposures and

activities before and after you developed symptoms. This can help to determine how you may have been exposed to monkeypox, and also help identify any close contacts who may be eligible for post-exposure vaccination to prevent or limit any potential illness.

## **7. Where can I go for more information?**

### **Los Angeles County, Department of Public Health**

[ph.lacounty.gov/monkeypox](http://ph.lacounty.gov/monkeypox)

### **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**

[cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/index.html](http://cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/index.html)

### **California Department of Public Health**

[cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Monkeypox.aspx](http://cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Monkeypox.aspx)