

# Mpox (Monkeypox)

## FACT SHEET



LIVINGSTON COUNTY  
Health Department

### What is mpox?

Mpox (formerly monkeypox) is a rare disease caused by infection with the mpox virus. Mpox virus is part of the same family of viruses as variola virus, the virus that causes smallpox. Mpox symptoms are similar to smallpox symptoms, but milder. Mpox is rarely fatal.

Mpox is most commonly reported in several central and western African countries. In the past, almost all mpox cases in people outside of Africa were linked to international travel to countries where the disease commonly occurs or through imported animals.

### Who gets mpox?

Mpox can spread to anyone through close, personal, often skin-to-skin contact with a person who is infected with mpox. A pregnant person can also spread the virus to their fetus through the placenta.

### How is mpox spread?

Mpox is spread person to person by close contact with a mpox rash or sores, body fluids, and respiratory droplets. The risk is considered low for getting mpox by touching objects, fabrics, and surfaces that have been used by someone with mpox and not disinfected, such as clothing, bedding, towels, etc. A person with mpox can spread it to others from the time symptoms start until the rash has fully healed and a fresh layer of skin has formed.

### What are the symptoms of mpox?

Symptoms of mpox can include:

- Fever
- Headache
- Muscle aches and backache
- Swollen lymph nodes
- Chills
- Exhaustion
- Respiratory symptoms (e.g. sore throat, nasal congestion, or cough)
- A rash that can look like pimples or blisters that appears on the face, inside the mouth, and on other parts of the body, like the hands, feet, chest, genitals or anus.

Mpox symptoms usually start 7–14 days after exposure but can take up to 21 days to appear.

Mpox can be spread from the time symptoms start until the rash has healed, all scabs have fallen off, and a fresh layer of skin has formed. The illness typically lasts 2-4 weeks.

### What to do if you have symptoms:

- Contact a health care provider right away for testing and guidance.
- Isolate away from others.
- If mpox is confirmed: avoid skin-to-skin or face-to-face contact, including sexual contact, with others until you are no longer considered infectious.
- If you are around others (ex., while seeking medical care), wear clothing that covers your rash and a well-fitting mask.

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## Am I at risk?

Based on limited information available at this time, risk to the public appears low. People who may have symptoms of mpox, such as characteristic rashes or sores, should contact their healthcare provider for a risk assessment. People who may be at higher risk might include but are not limited to those who:

- 1). Had contact with someone who had a rash that looks like mpox or someone who was diagnosed with confirmed or probable mpox.
- 2). Had skin-to-skin contact with someone in a social network experiencing mpox activity. This includes men who have sex with men who meet partners through an online website, social app (ex., Tinder, Grindr), or social event (e.g., a bar or party).
- 3). Traveled to an area with confirmed cases of mpox or where mpox activity has been ongoing.

## How is mpox diagnosed?

Mpox is diagnosed by swabbing a rash or sore from people suspected of having mpox. The swab sample can be collected during an office visit with your primary care provider or other healthcare provider. The sample is then sent for laboratory testing. If you cannot find testing near you, contact LCHD at 517-546-9850.

## What is the treatment for mpox?

There is no specific treatment for mpox, although antiviral medications for smallpox may be used. In some cases, a vaccine may be able to prevent infection after exposure.

## How can mpox be prevented?

There are several steps to take to prevent mpox:

- If you have symptoms, stay away from others. Contact your health care provider for testing and guidance.
- Avoid skin-to-skin contact and sexual activity with people who have flu-like illness or unexplained rashes.
- Avoid contact with any materials that have been in contact with an infected person.
- Wash your hands with soap and water or use an alcohol-based sanitizer, especially before eating or touching your face and after you use the bathroom.
- Use protective equipment (mask, disposable gowns, gloves, and eye protection if possible) when caring for sick people or doing their laundry.
- Avoid contact with animals that may be infected, including your pets.

## For more information:

Learn more by visiting:

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

If you have concerns about mpox, contact your primary care provider.

*This fact sheet is for informational purposes only and is not intended for self-diagnosis or as a substitute for consultation with a health care provider. For more information contact your health care provider or visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov).*

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