

Monkeypox Fact Sheet – 2022

Monkeypox is a rare disease caused by the monkeypox virus, which belongs to the same group of viruses as smallpox. African rodents and non-human primates (like monkeys) may harbor the virus and infect people. Monkeypox virus was first found in laboratory monkeys in 1958. The first human case was recorded in 1970 in the Democratic Republic of Congo during a period of intensified effort to eliminate smallpox. Since then monkeypox has been reported in humans in other central and western African countries.

Scientists at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are tracking multiple cases of monkeypox that have been reported in several countries that don't normally report monkeypox, including [the United States](#).

How is monkeypox spread?

- Spread from animals to people through the bite or scratch of an infected animal, by handling wild game, or through the use of products made from infected animals.
- Virus can also cross the placenta from the mother to her fetus
- Between people primarily through direct contact with infectious sores, scabs, or body fluids
- Direct contact with materials that have touched infectious body fluids or sores, such as clothing or linens.
- May be spread by respiratory secretions during **prolonged, face-to-face contact**.

What are the symptoms of monkeypox?

Symptoms usually appear 7–14 days after exposure and include:

- Fever
- Headache
- Backache
- Swollen lymph nodes
- Sore throat
- Cough

One to three days after the onset of fever, a blister-like rash usually appears first on the face and then spreads to other parts of the body. People with monkeypox are contagious until all lesions have scabbed over and have fallen off the person's skin.

The illness usually lasts for 2–4 weeks

What is the treatment for monkeypox?

There are no proven effective treatments that are specific for monkeypox. Patients are treated to provide symptom relief.

Vaccines for smallpox and monkeypox are not currently available to the general public. If there was an outbreak in the United States, the CDC would provide recommendations about who should be vaccinated.

How can I prevent monkeypox?

- Avoid contact with animals that could carry the virus (including animals who are sick or that have been found dead in areas where monkeypox occurs).
- Avoid contact with any materials, such as bedding, that have been in contact with a sick animal or person.
- Separate infected patients from other people and animals who could be at risk for infection.
- Wear proper personal protective equipment when caring for infected patients.
- Always practice good hand hygiene

How can I get more information about monkeypox?

- If you have concerns about monkeypox, contact your healthcare provider.
- Visit the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services at <https://epi.dph.ncdhhs.gov/cd/diseases/monkeypox.html>
- Visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at <https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/>