



# MONKEYPOX FAQS



A compiled list of the most current information according to the [Illinois Department of Public Health](#) and the [Chicago Department of Health](#)

## 1) WHAT IS MPV (MONKEYPOX)?

MPV is a disease caused by the monkeypox virus. MPV is not a new disease and has been studied since the 1950s. Recently, however, public health officials have seen sustained person-to-person spread of the disease that has not been observed previously.

## 2) WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF MPV?

Symptoms of monkeypox typically include a rash, fever, chills, swollen lymph nodes, intense headache, muscle aches, back pain, and low energy. The rash usually begins within one to three days after the appearance of fever, often first appearing on the face and spreading to other parts of the body. Lesions can be flat or slightly raised, filled with clear or yellowish fluid, and can then crust, dry up and fall off. The rash tends to be concentrated on the face, palms of the hands, and soles of the feet. Lesions can also be found on the mouth, genitals, anus, and eyes.

## 3) HOW LONG DOES MPV LAST?

Once you are exposed to MPV, it may take 1-3 weeks to start developing symptoms, including a rash. This is called the "incubation period." After symptoms begin presenting, it may take 2-4 weeks for your lesions to go through the cycle of opening, crusting, drying up and falling off. Once the rash has fully healed and a fresh layer of skin has formed, you are no longer considered to be contagious.

## 4) HOW DOES MPV SPREAD PERSON-TO-PERSON?

The main way it is currently spreading is through direct contact with a rash or sore on someone infected with MPV. It can also spread through clothing, bedding/linens, or other materials used by a person infected with MPV. Spread can occur during intimate activities, including: oral, anal, and vaginal sex; hugging, kissing, and cuddling; and contact with bedding or other items that have the virus on them during or after intimate activity. MPV can sometimes be spread through respiratory secretions during prolonged face-to-face contact; however, it is important to note that unlike COVID-19, which can be spread via casual contact (i.e. less than 6 ft apart for 15 minutes), airborne MPV spread only happens through sustained, intimate contact (i.e. less than 6 ft apart for over 3 hours).

## 5) WHO IS AT RISK OF CONTRACTING MPV?

Anyone who has close physical contact with someone who is infectious is at risk. The risk of MPV is NOT limited to those who are sexually active, gay or bisexual, or other men who have sex with men (MSM).

## 6) WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I THINK I MAY HAVE MPV?

If you have symptoms or expect you have been exposed to MPV, you should: 1) See a healthcare provider; if you don't have a provider, visit [findahealthcenter.hrsa.gov](https://findahealthcenter.hrsa.gov) or call 312-746-4835 to get connected to care, 2) Avoid close contact with others, including those in your home, 3) If unable to separate from others, wear a mask and cover rash/sores when around others, 4) Take a break from sex and going to public places, 5) Do not share clothing, bedding, towels, dishes, or utensils, 6) Wash your hands and clean shared surfaces regularly.

## **7) IS THERE A TEST FOR MPV?**

Yes. If you are experiencing symptoms, your healthcare provider may administer an MPV test. MPV can be diagnosed via a test where a medical professional will take a swab of an open lesion and send the culture to a testing facility to be analyzed. There is currently no available MPV test for those not experiencing symptoms.

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## **8) WHAT TREATMENT IS AVAILABLE FOR MPV?**

Many people with MPV make a full recovery without treatment; however, some patients may need supportive care to help manage pain or avoid complications. For patients with severe cases or those who are immunocompromised, your doctor may discuss options including an antiviral treatment called TPOXX. Please note that TPOXX is now only available on an Investigational New Drug, or IND basis. IND approvals require significant paperwork, although steps are being taken to reduce these bureaucratic barriers. If you are having pain in the mouth, genital region, or anus, nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, or difficulty urinating or defecating, discuss treatment options with a healthcare provider.

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## **9) IS THERE A VACCINE TO PREVENT MPV?**

Yes. The JYNNEOS vaccine is approved by the FDA to prevent MPV infection. The JYNNEOS vaccine is a two-dose vaccine given under the skin at least 28 days apart. Currently, the JYNNEOS vaccine supply is extremely limited. Due to limited supply, first doses are being prioritized. The State of Illinois and City of Chicago both received another shipment of vaccine this past weekend and are expecting an additional shipment before the end of the month.

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## **10) WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE THE MPV VACCINE?**

Eligibility for the POV vaccination may change over time, but currently, close contacts of someone with MPV are prioritized for vaccination. In addition, people who meet all the following conditions are eligible for vaccination: gay, bisexual, and other (cis or trans) men who have sex with other men (MSM); age 18 or older; had multiple or anonymous sex partners, sex at a social or sexual venue, or sex in exchange for money or goods within the last 14 days. If you have had MPV, then you likely have protection against another infection and are not eligible to be vaccinated. The vaccine is currently recommended for the general public, including cis or trans men who have sex with men without any of the additional risk factors.

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## **11) WILL I LOSE PROTECTION IF I HAVE TO WAIT LONGER THAN 4 WEEKS TO RECEIVE MY SECOND DOSE?**

No. Most of the immunity from the MPV vaccine is conferred during the first dose. The guidance to wait 4 weeks before receiving a second dose is a minimum requirement, not a maximum. You will receive the full strength immunity from the second dose even if you have to wait longer to receive it. With a vaccine supply so limited, the Chicago Department of Health is prioritizing getting as many first doses out as possible to help arrest the spread of MPV. This best practice is being followed by other public health departments across the country, including New York and California, as well as in other countries, such as Canada and Germany.

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## **12) IF I AM A HEALTHCARE WORKER, SHOULD I GET THE VACCINE?**

The MPV vaccine is not currently recommended for healthcare workers that do not meet any of the additional criteria. So far, there have been no documented cases of MPV transmission from a patient to a healthcare worker.

### **13) IS SOMEONE INFECTED WITH MPV CONTAGIOUS BEFORE SYMPTOMS APPEAR?**

MPV is not thought to spread in advance of symptoms. If you are exposed to MPV, it may be 1-3 weeks before you develop symptoms including a rash. While those who are infected may not be contagious until they start experiencing symptoms, these symptoms may be mild (such as fatigue) and may not be readily noticed.

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### **14) WHAT IS THE RISK OF BEING EXPOSED TO MPV AT THE GROCERY STORE, A BUSY COFFEE SHOP, AND THE CTA TRAIN OR BUS?**

MPV can be spread through direct skin-to-skin contact with rash lesions; sexual/intimate contact including kissing; living in a house and sharing a bed with someone; sharing towels or unwashed clothing; respiratory secretions through prolonged face-to-face interactions. MPV is NOT spread through casual conversations or walking by someone with MPV in settings such as a grocery store or on the train. MPV is not as contagious as influenza or COVID-19. You do not become infected by being around infected persons unless you have prolonged close contact or share bedding or clothing with someone who has MPV.

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### **15) CAN I GET MPV IF I USE GYM EQUIPMENT OR A PUBLIC RESTROOM AFTER SOMEONE WITH MPV HAS USED IT?**

This is highly unlikely. There has been no documented transmission using gym equipment or a public restroom. Make sure to wipe equipment before and after use and wash your hands frequently, especially after using a restroom.

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### **16) IS THERE RISK OF EXPOSURE DANCING ON A CROWDED DANCE FLOOR OR SHARING DRINKS WITH OTHERS?**

It depends how close you are and how much clothing you are wearing. While MPV is spreading, you should exercise caution in situations where you can't maintain some sense of personal space. In places where clothing is minimal and you could experience sustained close contact, such as crowded raves and clubs, the risk increases. Avoid any rash you see on others and consider minimizing skin-to-skin contact with clothing and distance. Avoid sharing drinks with others. Settings where there is a higher likelihood of spreading MPV include enclosed spaces such as back rooms, or sex clubs, where there is minimal or no clothing and where intimate sexual contact occurs.

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### **17) CAN I GET MPV FROM USING THE SAME WASHING MACHINE AS SOMEONE WASHING THEIR INFECTED LINENS?**

This is highly unlikely. Ordinary laundry detergent should be enough to kill the virus attached to any linens or clothing.

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### **18) IF I HAVE ALREADY RECOVERED FROM MPV, AM I AT RISK OF REINFECTION?**

Unlike COVID-19, MPV rarely mutates as it spreads, greatly reducing the likelihood of a new viral strain. Therefore, those who have already had MPV are thought to have robust immunity to the virus going forward with minimal risk of reinfection.

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### **19) WHERE CAN I FIND MORE INFORMATION ABOUT MPV?**

For more information, please visit the Chicago Department of Public Health website at [chi.gov/monkey.pox](http://chi.gov/monkey.pox) or call the CDPH Call Center at 312-746-4835 (Chicago residents only).