



# MONKEYPOX:

## FACT SHEET

### WHAT IS MONKEYPOX?

Monkeypox is a rare disease caused by infection with the monkeypox virus. Monkeypox virus is part of the same family of viruses as variola virus, the virus that causes smallpox. Monkeypox symptoms are similar to smallpox symptoms, but milder, and monkeypox is rarely fatal. Monkeypox is not related to chickenpox.

### HOW DOES MONKEYPOX SPREAD?

Monkeypox spreads in different ways. The virus can spread from person-to-person through:



direct contact with the infectious rash, scabs, or body fluids



respiratory secretions during prolonged, face-to-face contact, or during intimate physical contact, such as kissing, cuddling, or sex



touching items (such as clothing or linens) that previously touched the infectious rash or body fluids



pregnant people can spread the virus to their fetus through the placenta

It's also possible for people to get monkeypox from infected animals, either by being scratched or bitten by the animal or by preparing or eating meat or using products from an infected animal.

Monkeypox can spread from the time symptoms start until the rash has fully healed and a fresh layer of skin has formed. The illness typically lasts 2-4 weeks. People who do not have monkeypox symptoms cannot spread the virus to others. At this time, it is not known if monkeypox can spread through semen or vaginal fluids.



### AS A CONTACT, YOU WILL BE NOTIFIED BY PUBLIC HEALTH:

Contacts of animals or people confirmed to have monkeypox should be monitored for symptoms for 21 days after their last exposure.

- Contacts that remain asymptomatic can continue routine daily activities (e.g., go to work, school). Contacts should not donate blood, cells, tissue, breast milk, semen, or organs while they are under symptom surveillance.

### Symptoms of concern include:

headache

fever  $\geq 100.4^{\circ}\text{F}$  ( $38^{\circ}\text{C}$ )\*

swollen lymph nodes

exhaustion

backache

chills

new skin rash\*

muscle pain

\*Fever and rash occur in nearly all people infected with monkeypox virus.

**IF YOU SUSPECT YOU HAVE BEEN EXPOSED CONTACT YOUR HEALTHCARE PROVIDER.**

For current guidance and vaccine information visit:  
[HCPH.org/Monkeypox](https://HCPH.org/Monkeypox)

