

Monkeypox FAQs

What is monkeypox?

Monkeypox is a rare disease caused by an infection with the monkeypox virus. The virus is part of the same family of viruses as smallpox, but milder, and rarely fatal. Over 99% of people infected with the form of the virus identified in the U.S 2022 outbreak are likely to recover.

How is the virus spread?

Monkeypox can spread to anyone through close contact (often skin-to-skin) including:

- Direct contact with rash, scabs, or bodily fluids from a person with the virus
- Touching objects, fabrics (clothing, bedding, or towels), and surfaces that have been used by someone with the virus
- Direct contact with respiratory secretions

What are the symptoms?

Symptoms typically last 2 to 4 weeks:

- Fever
- Headache
- Muscle Aches
- Swollen lymph nodes
- Chills
- Fatigue
- Respiratory symptoms (sore throat, nasal congestion, or cough)
- Rash that can look like pimples or blisters*

*The rash can appear on the face, inside the mouth, and on other parts of the body (hands, feet, chest, genitals, or anus) and usually occurs within 1-3 days after a fever. The rash evolves from lesions with a flat base to slightly raised firm lesions, to lesions filled with clear fluid, to lesions with yellowish fluid, then crust which dries up and fall off. People with the virus are contagious until all lesions have scabbed over and have fallen off the skin.

What is the treatment?

Symptoms normally resolve on their own; however, medication for pain and fever can be used to relieve symptoms. Antivirals (Tecovirimat) may be recommended for people who are more likely to get severely ill (e.g., individuals with weakened immune systems).

How can I prevent contracting the virus?

- Avoid close, skin-to-skin contact with people who have a rash that looks like monkeypox.
- Do not handle or touch the bedding, towels, or clothing of a person with the virus.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- CDC recommends vaccination for individuals exposed and at risk to the virus.

What should I do if I think I may have symptoms or have been exposed?

Monitor yourself closely for signs and symptoms, and contact a healthcare provider or the Clarke Health Center for information about testing and post-exposure prophylaxis.

How do I find additional information about the virus?

- Visit the [New York State Department of Health](#)
- Visit the [Chemung County Health Department](#)
- Visit the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)