What To Do if You are a Close Contact of a Person With Monkeypox

If you have been informed that you are a close contact of a person with monkeypox, it’s important to take steps to protect your health and the health of others. Close contacts may be notified by a public health professional from their state, tribal, local, or territorial health department, or directly by someone they had close contact with during the time the person with monkeypox had symptoms. People exposed to monkeypox virus can continue their routine daily activities (for example, go to work or school) if they do not have signs or symptoms of monkeypox.

Who is a Close Contact?

A close contact is anyone who was exposed to someone with monkeypox symptoms through

- Having sex; this includes oral, anal, or vaginal sex.
- Touching or coming in close contact with the rash of a person with monkeypox.
- Being hugged, cuddled, kissed, or having other prolonged skin-to-skin contact.
- Sharing cups, utensils, towels, clothing, bedding, blankets, or other personal objects and materials used by someone with monkeypox.

Take These Steps as Soon as Possible

1. Watch for symptoms of monkeypox for 21 days from the date of your last exposure.

   People with monkeypox can get a rash on any part of the body, like the genitals, anus (butthole), hands, feet, chest, face, or mouth.
   - The rash will go through several stages, including scabs, before healing.
   - The rash can initially look like pimples or blisters and may be painful or itchy.

   Other symptoms of monkeypox can include
   - Fever
   - Chills
   - Swollen lymph nodes
   - Exhaustion
   - Muscle aches and backache
   - Headache
   - Respiratory symptoms (for example, sore throat, nasal congestion, or cough)

   You may experience all, or only a few symptoms.
   - Sometimes people have flu-like symptoms before the rash.
   - Some people get a rash first, followed by other symptoms.
   - Others only experience a rash.

www.cdc.gov/monkeypox
2 Consider getting vaccinated.

- Close contacts of someone who has monkeypox can get vaccinated to prevent or lessen the severity of disease.

- Getting vaccinated as soon as possible after exposure to someone with monkeypox (if exposed less than 14 days ago, ideally within 4 days of exposure) provides the best chance to prevent the disease or make it less severe.

- If you need help deciding whether you should get vaccinated, talk to a healthcare provider or contact your local health department. They can help you determine if you should get vaccinated.

- Learn more about monkeypox vaccination, including who should get vaccinated, where to get vaccinated, cost, and more.

3 If you have a new or unexplained rash or other monkeypox symptoms, see a healthcare provider.

If you don’t have a provider or health insurance, contact your local health department to find out how to access the healthcare services in your community.

- Stay away from other people and avoid sharing things you have used or touched until you have been seen by a healthcare provider.

- Before you are seen by a healthcare provider, cover all parts of the rash with clothing, gloves, or bandages, wear a mask and let them know you may have monkeypox.

- Do not touch or scratch the rash. This can spread the rash to other parts of your body, increase the chance of spreading the virus to others, and possibly cause open lesions to become infected by bacteria.

Your healthcare provider will help you decide if you need to be tested for monkeypox. Currently, testing is only recommended if you have a rash consistent with monkeypox. Only a healthcare provider can order a monkeypox test. Your healthcare provider may take a specimen and send it to a lab for testing, or they may send you to a lab for both specimen collection and testing.

- If your test result is positive, follow your healthcare provider’s recommendations.

- Wash your hands often and try not to touch your eyes.

- Stay in a space away from others until your rash has healed, all scabs have fallen off, and a fresh layer of intact skin has formed.

- If you must be around other people, you should fully cover all lesions, wear a well-fitting mask and clean and disinfect your living space frequently.

- You should try to avoid contact with people who are more likely to get very sick, like children under 8 years old, people who are pregnant, and people who have weakened immune systems or certain skin conditions, and avoid contact with pets.

- It’s important to notify your close contacts that they may have been exposed to monkeypox as soon as possible.

Learn more about what to do if you are sick.

www.cdc.gov/monkeypox