

Guidance for Individuals Who Have Been Diagnosed with Monkeypox

What happens while I wait for testing results or if I am diagnosed with monkeypox?

If you are tested or diagnosed with monkeypox, you will be required to isolate at home and avoid close contact with other people and animals, including pets, until all of your rash lesions have resolved, the scabs have fallen off, and a fresh layer of skin has formed. This usually takes about 2-4 weeks.

While you are isolating, you should not leave your home unless it is required for medical care. If you need to seek healthcare while you are isolating, please call your doctor's office or hospital in advance to let them know you have been diagnosed with monkeypox.

How is monkeypox virus spread to others?

Isolation at home is important because the monkeypox virus can be spread to others. Monkeypox virus primarily spreads between people through direct contact with infectious sores, scabs, or body fluids which can occur during intimate contact, including during sex, as well as activities like kissing, cuddling, or touching parts of the body with sores. It can also be spread through respiratory secretions during prolonged, face-to-face contact. The contagious period starts when first sign of illness are present until after all the scabs on the skin have fallen off and a fresh layer of intact skin has formed. The greatest risk of spread is to household and other close contacts.

What protective measures should I take at home?

The ability to isolate at home depends on factors including if you are a child or adult, whether you have other people or pets in the home, and the nature and extent of your sores.

- Do not leave your home except as required for follow-up care.
- Limit contact with household members who are not ill. If you have extensive sores that can't be covered or if you are experiencing respiratory symptoms, isolate in a room separate from other family members and pets when possible.
- If you do need to be in contact with others in the home, both you and your other household members should wear a well-fitting surgical mask.
- Restrict visitors to those who are essential to being in the home, especially if they have not been previously exposed.
- Avoid contact with animals, including pets, when possible.
- Avoid use of contact lenses to prevent inadvertent infection of the eye.
- Avoid shaving areas of the body with lesions as this can lead to spread of the virus.
- Household members who are not ill should limit contact with you until your lesions have resolved, the scabs have fallen off, and a fresh layer of intact skin has formed; non-household members should not visit.
- After ending isolation when all scabs have fallen off, use safe sex, barrier practices (i.e., wearing condoms) for at least 8 weeks.

What personal protective equipment (PPE) should I use at home?

You should wear a surgical mask, especially if you have respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath, sore throat) or significant mouth sores, when around others. If this is not feasible (e.g., a child with monkeypox), have your household members wear a surgical mask around you.

Wear disposable gloves when directly touching any sores and throw them out after use. When around others, cover skin sores to the best extent possible (e.g., long sleeves, long pants). Contain and dispose of contaminated waste (e.g., dressings, bandages, gloves) by double bagging them to prevent household members or pets having contact with it.

Is there anything I should clean in the home?

- Wash your hands with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand rub after touching sores, clothing, linens, or surfaces that may have had contact with sores.
- Laundry (e.g., bedding, towels, clothing) may be washed in a standard washing machine with warm water and detergent; bleach may be added but is not necessary.
 - Avoid direct contact with contaminated material on bedding.
 - Do not shake soiled laundry.
- Do not share dishes and other eating utensils. Soiled dishes and eating utensils should be washed in a dishwasher or by hand with warm water and soap.
- Contaminated surfaces should be cleaned and disinfected. Standard household cleaning/disinfectants may be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- If possible, use a separate bathroom from others who live in the same household. If there is not a separate bathroom in the home, you should clean and disinfect surfaces (e.g., counters, toilet seats, faucets) after using a shared space if sores are exposed (e.g., showering, toileting, changing bandages covering the lesions).
- Avoid direct contact with upholstered furniture and porous materials that cannot be laundered by placing coversheets, waterproof mattress covers, blankets, or tarps over these surfaces.
- Additional household disinfection guidance can be found here:
<https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/pdf/Monkeypox-Interim-Guidance-for-Household-Disinfection-508.pdf>

How will my household and other close contacts be monitored?

The health department will ask you about those with whom you have had close contact while you are sick. Based on the extent of this contact, we will instruct them on monitoring for fever and other symptoms for 21 days.