

# Monkeypox



Monkeypox is a rare viral infection similar to Smallpox that occurs mostly in regions of Africa. It gets its name from being first identified in infected monkeys (thought to be infected by African rodents). However, some US cases in the past have been a result of close contact with infected prairie dogs. Monkeypox is spread person to person through prolonged face-to-face contact whereby large droplets can enter the respiratory tract and mucous membranes such as the eyes, nose, mouth. It can also spread when there is contact with the lesions, body fluids, and contaminated bedding and clothing. Animal to human transmission occurs from contact with the blood, body fluids, and lesions of the infected animals.

Currently, there is 1 case confirmed in the state of Massachusetts, and suspected cases in New York, Florida, Utah, and Washington state. Concerning is that Monkeypox could become a worldwide outbreak with cases seen in Europe, Canada, and Australia.

Symptoms include fever, chills, aches, fatigue, swollen lymph nodes, and blister-like lesions. The lesions become pustules and drain, crusting over, then healing. Monkeypox is contagious until the lesions are scabbed. The recovery period from the illness is usually 2-4 weeks.

There is no specific treatment for Monkeypox. Care should focus on lessening the symptoms and preventing long-term effects. Antiviral medication and Immune Globulin may be used in severe cases. Complications may include secondary infections such as pneumonia, sepsis, encephalitis, and infection of the cornea of the eye (can lead to blindness).

In the past, individuals who received the smallpox vaccine were also protected from Monkeypox. A newer vaccine is available for high-risk individuals, such as healthcare workers, that is in the process of being released from the US government stockpile.

Source: CDC.gov, who.int

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