



Frequently Asked Questions

Get answers to your questions about monkeypox. Learn about symptoms, treatment and what to do if you've been exposed or get sick.

1. What is monkeypox?

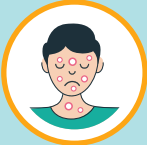

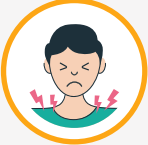



Monkeypox is a contagious disease caused by infection with the monkeypox virus. At Atrium Health, we're monitoring the current outbreak and reported cases of monkeypox in our region.

2. What are the symptoms of monkeypox?

The most common symptom of monkeypox is a rash that goes through several stages. It starts as flat spots and turns into sores that can look like pimples or blisters. The rash may be painful or itchy. It can appear on the face, inside the mouth and on other parts of the body like the hands, feet, chest, genitals or anus. Rectal pain can be a warning sign of monkeypox.

The virus can also cause flu-like symptoms that may begin a few days before the rash appears, including fever, headache, muscle aches and backache, swollen lymph nodes in the neck, arm pit or groin, chills and exhaustion.

You may experience all or only a few of the symptoms of monkeypox. Symptoms typically begin within 3 weeks of exposure and can appear in any order.

Always Present	May or may not be present				
 Rash	 Fever	 Muscle aches	 Swollen lymph nodes	 Headaches	 Chills

3. How does monkeypox spread?

Monkeypox spreads through close contact with an infected person's skin lesions (rash or scabs), respiratory droplets or bodily fluids, and through physical contact. The virus primarily spreads through direct physical contact, like kissing, cuddling or sex with someone who is already infected.

It can also spread by touching items that have the virus on them, like a blanket or cup used by someone who is sick with monkeypox, or through prolonged face-to-face interactions, which mainly happen when living with or providing close personal care for someone who has monkeypox.

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4. What should I do if I think I have monkeypox or was exposed to it?

If you're sick or were exposed to monkeypox and need testing or treatment, contact your Atrium Health on-site clinic provider or your primary care provider (PCP). You can also call Atrium Health's 24/7 Health Line at 704-468-8888. Stay home, keep the rash covered and avoid sex or close contact with others until you have been checked out by a healthcare provider. The healthcare provider will evaluate your symptoms and can order a test to diagnose monkeypox, if needed. They can also provide treatment recommendations.

5. Where can I get a monkeypox test?

Contact your Atrium Health on-site clinic provider or your primary care provider (PCP) if you need to get tested for monkeypox. Anyone who has been exposed to monkeypox or shows symptoms should get tested.

6. Is isolation required after getting a test for monkeypox?

Yes. Once tested, individuals will need to isolate until receiving their test results, which is typically 4 to 7 days.

7. Do I need to quarantine or isolate?

If you're exposed to monkeypox, monitor your health for 3 weeks after your last exposure and look for any of the symptoms listed on this handout. As long as you don't have symptoms, you can continue your usual activities. Don't donate blood, cells, tissue, breast milk, semen or organs during this 3-week period.

If you have a confirmed case of monkeypox, you may be asked to isolate at home except to get medical care. Avoid contact with people or pets you live with as much as possible. Continue isolation until your rash has healed completely.

8. What is the treatment for monkeypox?

Many people fully recover from monkeypox on their own, without treatment. In some cases, over-the-counter and prescription medications can help manage symptoms. Your healthcare provider can give you recommendations.

9. Is there a vaccine for monkeypox?

There are 2 vaccines that can help reduce the chance of infection and severity of symptoms in people who have been exposed or are at high risk of exposure to the virus.

They are offered to people aged 18 or older who self-identify as high risk, including people in close physical contact with someone diagnosed with monkeypox and men who have sex with men, or transgender individuals who had multiple or anonymous sex partners in the last 14 days. Individuals who meet these criteria should consult their PCP to see if they are eligible for the vaccine. Currently, vaccine supply is limited but certain health departments and high-risk clinics in the area have a small supply of vaccine. The [North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services](#) has more information on monkeypox vaccine supplies.

10. Are monkeypox vaccinations available to everyone?

Overall, there are not enough vaccine doses to meet the current demand. Due to limited supplies, public health authorities are prioritizing high-risk groups while awaiting additional shipments of the vaccine. While supplies are limited, eligibility is restricted to known contacts of people with monkeypox and those more likely to get monkeypox. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), this includes:

- People who have been identified by public health officials as a contact of someone with monkeypox
- People who are aware that one of their sexual partners in the past 2 weeks has been diagnosed with monkeypox
- People who had multiple sexual partners in the past 2 weeks
- Laboratory workers and some designated healthcare or public health workers whose jobs may expose them to the monkeypox virus



Atrium Health