

# ISOLATING IF YOU HAVE MONKEYPOX

CDC recommends that people with monkeypox remain isolated at home or at another location for the duration of illness, but that might not be possible in all situations. Prioritizing isolation and source control strategies helps prevent transmission while balancing the impact of this infection on the daily lives of people diagnosed with monkeypox. These considerations may change as we learn more from the 2022 global outbreak of monkeypox.

Current data suggest people can spread monkeypox from the time symptoms start until all symptoms have resolved, including full healing of the rash with formation of a fresh layer of skin. Ideally, people with monkeypox would remain in isolation for the duration of illness, which typically lasts two to four weeks.

**People with monkeypox should follow these recommendations until monkeypox infection has resolved:**

- Friends, family or others without an essential need to be in the home should not visit.
- Avoid close contact with others.
- Avoid close contact with pets in the home and other animals.
- Do not engage in sexual activity that involves direct physical contact.
- Do not share potentially contaminated items, such as bed linens, clothing, towels, wash cloths, drinking glasses or eating utensils.
- Routinely clean and disinfect commonly touched surfaces and items, such as counters or light switches, using an EPA-registered disinfectant in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- Wear well-fitting source control (ex. medical mask) when in close contact with others at home.
- Avoid use of contact lenses to prevent inadvertent infection of the eye.
- Avoid shaving rash-covered areas of the body as this can lead to spread of the virus.
- Use of an alcohol-based hand rub or hand washing with soap and water – should be performed by people with monkeypox and household contacts after touching rash material, clothing, linens, or environmental surfaces that may have had contact with rash material.
- When possible, the person with monkeypox should change their own bandages and handle contaminated linens while wearing disposable gloves, followed by immediate handwashing after removing gloves.
  - As a last resort, if assistance is needed with these activities, a household member should avoid extensive contact and wear, at a minimum, disposable medical gloves and a well-fitting mask or respirator. Any clothing that contacts the rash during dressing changes should be immediately laundered. Gloves should be disposed of after use, followed by handwashing.

## **Bathroom usage:**

- If possible, use a separate bathroom if there are others who live in the same household.
- If there is not a separate bathroom in the home, the patient should clean and disinfect surfaces such as counters, toilet seats, faucets, using an EPA-registered disinfectant after using a shared space. This may include during activities like showering, using the toilet, or changing bandages that cover the rash. Consider disposable glove use while cleaning if rash is present on the hands.

## **Limit Exposure to Others:**

- Avoid contact with unaffected individuals until the rash has resolved, the scabs have fallen off, and a fresh layer of intact skin has formed.
- Isolate in a room or area separate from other household members and pets when possible.
- Limit use of spaces, items, and food that are shared with other household members.
- Do not share dishes and other eating utensils. It is not necessary for the infected person to use separate utensils if properly washed. Wash soiled dishes and eating utensils in a dishwasher or by hand with warm water and soap.

## **Limit contamination within household:**

- Try to avoid contaminating upholstered furniture and other porous materials that cannot be laundered by placing coversheets, waterproof mattress covers, blankets, or tarps over these surfaces.
- Additional precautions such as steam cleaning can be considered if there is concern about contamination.
- Other household members should wear a respirator or a well-fitting mask when in close contact (e.g., within 6 feet) with the person with monkeypox for more than a brief encounter.

## **Considerations for isolating with animals in the home:**

- People with monkeypox should avoid contact with animals (specifically mammals), including pets.
  - If possible, friends or family members should care for healthy animals until the owner has fully recovered.
  - Keep any potentially infectious bandages, textiles (such as clothes, bedding) and other items away from pets, other domestic animals, and wildlife.
  - In general, any mammal may become infected with monkeypox. It is not thought that other animals such as reptiles, fish or birds can be infected.
- If you notice an animal that had contact with an infected person appears sick (such as lethargy, lack of appetite, coughing, bloating, nasal or eye secretions or crust, fever, rash) contact the owner's veterinarian, state public health veterinarian, or state animal health official.

**If you have questions or concerns, please contact your health care provider.**

### **Additional information may be found at:**

<https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/zoonoses/monkeypox/>

<https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/>

