

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT MONKEYPOX

### What do Long Term Care (LTC) providers need to know about [Monkeypox](#)?

If an employee or resident develops a new or unexplained rash or has a history of potential exposure staff should stay home and residents placed in isolation and the facility should notify the local health department. See below for description of symptoms and exposure.

### MONKEYPOX FAQs

#### 1. What is monkeypox?

- Monkeypox is a rare disease caused by infection with the monkeypox virus. The monkeypox virus is part of the same family of viruses as variola virus, the virus that causes smallpox. Monkeypox symptoms are like smallpox symptoms, but milder, and monkeypox is rarely fatal. Monkeypox is not related to chickenpox.
- Monkeypox was discovered in 1958 when two outbreaks of a pox-like disease occurred in colonies of monkeys. Despite being named “monkeypox,” the source of the disease remains unknown.
- The first human case of monkeypox was recorded in 1970. Prior to the 2022 outbreak, almost all monkeypox cases in people outside of Africa were linked to international travel to countries where the disease commonly occurs or through imported animals.

#### 2. What are the [symptoms](#) of monkeypox?

Initial symptoms of monkeypox can include:

- Fever
- Headache
- Muscle aches and backache
- Swollen lymph nodes
- Chills
- Exhaustion
- Respiratory symptoms (e.g., sore throat, nasal congestion, or cough)
- Rash: The rash may be located on or near the genitals (penis, testicles, labia, and vagina) or anus (butthole) but could also be on other areas like the hands, feet, chest, face, or mouth.
  - The rash will go through several stages, including scabs, before healing.
  - The rash can look like pimples or blisters and may be painful or itchy.

### 3. How soon do the symptoms or a rash develop after being exposed?

- Monkeypox symptoms usually start in 1-2 weeks but within three weeks of exposure to the virus. If someone has flu-like symptoms, they will usually develop a rash 1-4 days later.
- The rash usually lasts for 2-4 weeks and go through four stages—macular, papular, vesicular, to pustular—before scabbing over and resolving.

### 4. How do people with monkeypox often present?

Some people may experience all or only a few symptoms:

- Most people with monkeypox will get a rash.
- Sometimes, people get a rash first, followed by other symptoms. Others only experience a rash.
- Some people have developed a rash before (or without) other symptoms.

### 5. What does the [rash look like](#)?

- The rash associated with monkeypox can be confused with other rashes encountered in clinical practice including herpes, syphilis, and varicella (e.g., chicken pox).
- The characteristic rash associated with monkeypox lesions involve the following: deep-seated and well-circumscribed lesions, often with central umbilication; and lesion progression through specific sequential stages—macules, papules, vesicles, pustules, and scabs.; this can sometimes be confused with other diseases that are more commonly encountered in clinical practice (e.g., secondary syphilis, herpes, and varicella zoster).
- Key characteristics for identifying monkeypox
  - Lesions are well circumscribed, deep seated, and often develop umbilication (resembles a dot on the top of the lesion)
  - Lesions are relatively the same size and same stage of development on a single site of the body (ex: pustules on face or vesicles on legs)
  - Fever before rash
  - Lymphadenopathy common
  - Disseminated rash is centrifugal (more lesions on extremities, face)
  - Lesions on palms, soles
  - Lesions are often described as painful until the healing phase when they become itchy (crusts)

### 6. How long is a person contagious?

- A person with monkeypox can spread it to others from the time symptoms start until the rash has fully healed and a fresh layer of skin has formed.
- The symptoms and rash typically last 2-4 weeks.

### 7. When should one be suspicious a person may have monkeypox?

You should have a [suspicion of monkeypox](#) when a person has:

- New characteristic rash  
**OR**
- Epidemiologic risks for recent monkeypox exposure within 21 days of illness onset:

- Had contact with a person or people with a similar appearing rash or who received a diagnosis of confirmed or probable monkeypox, OR
- Had close or intimate in-person contact with individuals in a social network experiencing monkeypox activity, this includes men who have sex with men (MSM) who meet partners through an online website, digital application (“app”), or social event (e.g., a bar or party), OR
- Traveled outside the US to a country with confirmed cases of monkeypox or where Monkeypox virus is endemic.

#### 8. How does [monkeypox spread](#)?

- Direct skin-to-skin contact with rashes or other body fluids, including sexual and/or close intimate contact, is the predominant type of exposure for persons with monkeypox in the United States.
- Spread can also happen by:
  - Touching objects, fabrics (clothing, bedding, or towels), and surfaces that have been used by someone with monkeypox and that have not been disinfected.
  - Contact with respiratory secretions.

#### 9. Is there a [vaccine](#) and how effective is it?

- ACAM2000 and JYNNEOS™ (also known as Imvamune or Imvanex) are the two currently licensed vaccines in the United States to prevent smallpox.
- Past data from Africa suggests that the smallpox vaccine is at least 85% effective in preventing monkeypox. The effectiveness of JYNNEOS™ against monkeypox was concluded from a clinical study on the immunogenicity of JYNNEOS and efficacy data from animal studies.
- Smallpox and monkeypox vaccines are effective at protecting people against monkeypox when given before exposure to monkeypox. Experts believe that vaccination after a monkeypox exposure may help prevent the disease or make it less severe.

#### 10. Who should [get the vaccine](#)?

- Persons exposed to monkeypox virus and who have not received the smallpox vaccine within the last 3 years, should consider getting vaccinated.
- CDC recommends that the vaccine be given within 4 days from the date of exposure in order to prevent onset of the disease. If given between 4–14 days after the date of exposure, vaccination may reduce the symptoms of disease, but may not prevent the disease.
- Healthcare workers are not recommended at this time unless they work in a lab with monkeypox, or the health department has made specific recommendations given their role in responding to monkeypox.

#### 11. What side effects may happen after getting the vaccine?

Most people who get the smallpox or monkeypox vaccine have only minor reactions, like mild fever, tiredness, swollen glands, and redness and itching at the place where the vaccine is given.

For additional information, visit the CDC monkeypox [website](#).