

Q&A for Parents/Monkeypox and What to Know years August 10, 2022

In June 2022, the CDC began to closely monitor cases of monkeypox in the U.S. as it does not naturally occur here, but due to the number of diagnosed cases since May, tracking those cases became more of a priority. Since that time, more than 10,000 cases of monkeypox have been documented by the CDC. “On Aug. 4, the Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Xavier Becerra declared monkeypox a [public health emergency](#)(PHE).” Much has been in the news about this disease, and we wanted to provide as much information as possible so that you have a better understanding of the disease, its signs, its symptoms, and its potential exposure to you and your family.

Q: What is monkeypox?

A: Monkeypox is a disease caused by a virus. It has been in existence since the late 1950s and was discovered in lab monkeys at the time. It was not discovered in a person until 1970. Historically, monkeypox was most common in central and western Africa or in people who had traveled outside that area or who had been in close contact with imported animals.

More recently, the disease has spread outside of Africa. It is important to note, that monkeypox is spreading mostly through close, intimate contact (sexual activity) with someone who has monkeypox.

As of August 10, there were 10,392 cases of monkeypox diagnosed in the United States. The majority of those cases have been identified in California, Florida and New York. Many, but not all of those cases are among gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men. As of this date, only two children in the U.S. have been diagnosed with monkeypox.

However, anyone can contract monkeypox from close contact with someone who has the disease or contact with diseased animals, so it is important to understand how its spread, and its signs and symptoms.

Q: What are the signs and symptoms of monkeypox?

A: The following are symptoms that may be seen in someone infected with monkeypox. These may occur in isolation or as a cluster of symptoms.

- Rash which can be located on or near the genitalia or anus, hands, feet, chest, face, or mouth
 - The rash will initially resemble pimples or blisters and may be painful or itchy
 - The pimples/blisters will scab over before healing
 - This rash can look a lot like chickenpox
- Fever/chills
- Swollen lymph nodes
- Fatigue
- Muscle aches/backache/headache
- Sore throat, nasal congestion or cough

Q: How long will these symptoms last?

A: According to the CDC, monkeypox can show symptoms within 3 weeks of being exposed. A rash will usually surface within 1-4 days if the person infected has flu-like symptoms. The virus can be contagious from

the first symptoms until the rash has healed, the scabs have fallen off, and fresh skin has formed. This usually lasts from 2-4 weeks.

Q: How does monkeypox spread?

A: This virus can spread through contact with blood, bodily fluids, or fluid from the blisters. It can also spread through contact with bedding or other items contaminated by the virus, or through breathing in the virus.

Q: What should I do now to keep my child safe?

A: Avoid close contact with anyone who has been infected with the disease. Children can get rashes from many different causes, and **if you or your child has a new or unexplained rash that looks like pimples or blisters and other symptoms, and you may possibly have been exposed**, call your pediatrician or primary care doctor.

Q: Who is the most at risk for getting severely ill with monkeypox?

A: Young children under the age of 8, pregnant women, those who are immunocompromised, and individuals with severe eczema or other skin diseases, are more at risk of getting severely ill if they contract monkeypox.

The CDC recommends that babies remain in a separate room and not have contact with a parent or caregiver who has monkeypox.

If a new mother has been infected with monkeypox, breastfeeding should be delayed during the isolation period, and the breastmilk should not be used after pumping.

If you have any questions about monkeypox, please reach out to your pediatrician or primary care doctor for more information. If the pediatrician suspects monkeypox, a history will be taken and a skin swab will be completed. Treatment may be recommended based on the child's individual situation.

Again, it should be noted that there is a specific set of individuals who have contracted monkeypox, and as of late July, only two pediatric cases of monkeypox had been identified. Remaining alert to potential exposure and the signs and symptoms is the best way to manage monkeypox at this time.

Sources:

<https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/outbreak/us-outbreaks.html>

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

[https://www.healthychildren.org/english/health-issues/vaccine-preventable-diseases/pages/what-is-monkeypox.aspx?_ga=2.115975301.2007172406.1660235224-](https://www.healthychildren.org/english/health-issues/vaccine-preventable-diseases/pages/what-is-monkeypox.aspx?_ga=2.115975301.2007172406.1660235224-1040730764.1657718299&_gl=1*1mq7sy9*_ga*MTA0MDczMDc2NC4xNjU3NzE4Mjk5*_ga_FD9D3XZVQQ*MTY2MDIzNTIyNC4yLjAuMTY2MDIzNTIyNC4w)

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