

How can I protect other people if I get monkeypox?

If you have monkeypox, you will need to self-isolate until you are no longer infectious. Your health care provider will help you decide if you should be cared for in hospital or at home. This will depend on how serious your symptoms are, whether you have risk factors that put you at risk of more serious symptoms, and whether you can minimize the risk of infecting anyone you live with.

If you are isolating at home, protect others you live with by:

- Isolating in a separate room
- Using a separate bathroom, or cleaning after each use
- Cleaning frequently touched surfaces with soap and water and a household disinfectant and avoiding sweeping/vacuuming
- Using separate utensils, towels, objects, electronics and bedding
- Doing your own laundry, and putting materials in a plastic bag before carrying to the washing machine
- Opening windows throughout the house to keep the space well-ventilated

If you can't avoid being in the same room as someone else, avoid touching, clean hands often, cover your rash with clothing or bandages, wear well-fitting medical masks and open windows.

Why are we seeing monkeypox spread in communities of gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men?

The risk of monkeypox is not limited to communities of men who have sex with men. Anyone who has close contact with someone who is infectious is at risk. However, data tells us that sexual encounters between men who have sex with men have played a role in transmitting monkeypox in recent months. Some men who have sex with men are connected to dynamic sexual networks that extend across different cities and countries. This may explain why we are currently seeing cases in these communities. While the virus continues to circulate in these networks, experts and advocates are urging gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men to be alert to symptoms and take care to protect themselves and others.

Communities of gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men may have strong links with sexual health services. This has been demonstrated in the current outbreak, as cases have been identified among men coming forward to be tested in sexual health clinics.

Men accessing antiretrovirals for treatment or prevention of HIV infection also receive regular screening for sexually transmitted infections. This regular contact with health services has enabled the identification of monkeypox within the community and is an opportunity to deliver vaccination and reach those who need it.

Is my risk of monkeypox higher if I am living with HIV?

People with underlying immune deficiencies may be at risk of more serious illness from monkeypox. People living with HIV who know their status and have access to and properly use treatment can reach the point of viral suppression. This means that their immune systems are less

vulnerable to other infections than they would be without treatment. Studies are underway to better understand these questions. So far, men living healthily with HIV who have developed monkeypox in this outbreak have not reported worse health outcomes than others.

Where can I learn more about monkeypox?

Find answers to some of the most common questions on monkeypox here or read the WHO factsheet. Check your local official and community sources for updates on the situation near you. Many organizations supporting gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men, including HIV support organizations around the world are already providing strong leadership in offering information and support to their communities to help prevent the spread of monkeypox. Their work, also increasingly supported by broader LGBTQIA+ organizations, is central to efforts to address stigma and discrimination as well as information sharing. Reach out to trusted organizations in your country to get more information.

If you are having sex with multiple partners, seek regular screening for sexually transmitted infections and discuss with your health care provider whether you would benefit from taking PrEP.

Seeking health advice regularly and quickly, if you have symptoms, will help you get treatment if needed and avoid you infecting anyone else.