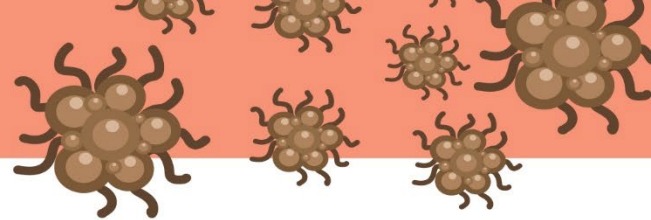


# Monkeypox



## What is monkeypox?

**Monkeypox** is a rare disease caused by the **monkeypox** virus, which belongs to the same group of viruses as smallpox. **Monkeypox** virus was first found in **laboratory** monkeys in **1958**. It has also been found in different kinds of rodents and primates in **Africa**.

## Who gets monkeypox?

Most human cases of **monkeypox** occur in central and **western parts** of Africa. The first human cases of **monkeypox** in the United States occurred in the **Midwest** in **2003** during an outbreak associated with imported animals. Other U.S. cases have rarely occurred among people who traveled to areas where the disease is more common. The first Virginia confirmed case of **monkeypox** occurred in 2022.

## How is monkeypox spread?

**Monkeypox** virus can spread to people when they are **bitten** by an animal infected with **monkeypox** or when they **touch** the blood, body fluids, or lesions of an infected animal or person. In the United States in **2003**, **monkeypox** was reported among several people who had contact with sick pet prairie dogs that had contact with imported African rodents. The virus **spreads** from person to person through large respiratory droplets. These droplets cannot travel more than several feet, so prolonged face-to-face contact is needed. Sometimes, **monkeypox** virus is spread from person to person through close contact or by touching body fluids of a person with **monkeypox**. In the United States in **2003**, no one got sick from being in contact with another person with **monkeypox**. Objects, such as bedding or clothing, contaminated with the virus can also spread the **monkeypox** virus.

## What are the symptoms of monkeypox?

In humans, the signs and symptoms of **monkeypox** are similar to those of smallpox, but they are usually milder. **Monkeypox** causes fever, headache, backache, swollen lymph nodes (not usually seen in smallpox), sore throat, and cough. One to three days after the onset of fever, a blister-like rash usually appears first on the face and then spreads to other parts of the body. The blisters go through several stages before they get crusty, scab over and fall off. People with **monkeypox** are contagious until all lesions have scabbed over and have fallen off the person's skin. The illness usually lasts for **2–4** weeks. In rare cases, **monkeypox** can cause death.

## How soon after exposure do symptoms appear?

Symptoms usually appear **6–13** days after exposure, with a range of **5–21** days.



## How is monkeypox diagnosed?

**Monkeypox** is diagnosed through **special** laboratory tests on samples taken from people or animals suspected of having **monkeypox**.

## What is the treatment for monkeypox?

Treatment consists of supportive care and relief of symptoms. There are no proven effective treatments that are specific for **monkeypox**. Some treatments are being investigated for treating **monkeypox**.

## How can monkeypox be prevented?

There are several steps to take to prevent monkeypox.

- **Avoid** contact with animals that could carry the virus (including animals who are sick or that have been found dead in areas where **monkeypox** occurs).
- **Avoid** contact with any materials, such as bedding, that have been in contact with a sick animal.
- **Separate** infected patients from other people and animals who could be at risk for infection.
- **Wear** proper personal protective equipment when caring for infected patients.
- **Wash** your hands with soap and water, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer, after caring for infected patients.

Also, the vaccines for smallpox and **monkeypox** might reduce the chance of getting **monkeypox**. These vaccines, however, are not currently available to the general public. If there was an outbreak of **monkeypox** in the United States, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) would provide recommendations about who should be vaccinated.

## How can I get more information about monkeypox?

- **If** you have concerns about **monkeypox**, contact your healthcare provider.
- **Call** your local health department. A directory of local health departments is located at <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/local-health-districts/>
- **Visit** the VDH website at <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/surveillance-and-investigation/monkeypox/>
- **Visit** the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/monkeypox/index.htm>

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