What New Yorkers Need to Know About Monkeypox

What is monkeypox?
Monkeypox is a rare disease that is caused by the monkeypox virus. The monkeypox virus spreads between animals and humans.

What are the symptoms of monkeypox?
Symptoms of monkeypox appear seven to 14 days after infection. Early symptoms include fever, headache, muscle aches, backache, swollen lymph nodes, chills and exhaustion.

One to three days after the initial symptoms, a person will develop a rash and lesions. The rash often starts on the face and then spreads to other parts of their body. A person may experience symptoms for two to four weeks.

How is monkeypox transmitted?
Monkeypox is spread when a person comes into contact with an animal or human with the virus, or materials (such as clothing and bedding) that contain the virus. The virus is spread through large respiratory droplets and body fluids.

How do you prevent monkeypox?
In general, monkeypox is very rare, but it can be prevented by:

- Avoiding contact with people who may be sick
- Avoiding contact with materials, such as bedding, that have been used by someone who is sick
- Washing your hands often with soap and water, or using hand sanitizer
- Wearing a face mask around others

Smallpox vaccine can also help protect people from getting monkeypox.

What should I do if I have symptoms?
If you experience flu-like illness, with rashes on the face and body and swelling of the lymph nodes, contact your health care provider.

Can monkeypox be treated?
There is currently no proven, safe treatment for monkeypox. However, the smallpox vaccine, and some antivirals may be used to treat monkeypox.

If you need a health care provider, call 844-NYC-4NYC (844-692-4692). NYC provides care regardless of immigration status or ability to pay.

For more information, visit nyc.gov/health/monkeypox.

The NYC Health Department may change recommendations as the situation evolves.  5.24.22