



How to Protect Yourself and Others from MPV

There is a monkeypox (MPV) outbreak in New York City (NYC), across the country and globally. The following information can help you protect yourself and others.

How is MPV spreading?

In the current outbreak, MPV:

- Is spreading mainly during oral, anal and vaginal sex and other intimate contact such as rimming, hugging, kissing, biting, cuddling and massage
- Can spread through direct contact with a rash or sores of someone who has MPV; from coming into contact with clothing, bedding, towels or other items they have used; and from prolonged face-to-face contact with someone who has MPV
- Spreads when people have symptoms, but experts are studying whether it spreads before symptoms start or after they end
- May spread through semen, saliva, feces (poop) and other body fluids — experts are studying whether this is possible

What can happen if I get MPV?

In the current outbreak, hospitalization and death from MPV are rare. The most common symptom is a rash or sores that may look like pimples or blisters. The rash and sores may be all over the body or on certain parts, including around and inside the genitals, anus and mouth, and last for two to four weeks. The rash can be extremely itchy and painful and interfere with daily activities. Sores in the anus or urethra can make it hard to go to the bathroom. Some people also have flu-like symptoms such as sore throat, fever and fatigue. Complications from MPV include inflammation of the rectal lining (proctitis). Even after healing, people can have scarring in the areas where they had sores. We do not know if MPV causes long-term health problems.

Who is at the highest risk of getting MPV?

Anyone can get MPV. However, based on current cases, the virus is spreading mainly within social circles of gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men; transgender people; gender-nonconforming people; and nonbinary people. Having multiple sex partners, or anonymous sex or other intimate contact, including with people at raves, clubs and sex parties, in saunas, or through online apps or social media, increases the risk for exposure. Since MPV can be transmitted through any type of prolonged skin-to-skin contact, going to clubs, raves, concerts, large parties and other crowded events may also increase the risk if you or others wear clothing that exposes your skin.

Who is at high risk of severe disease from MPV?

People who have HIV (especially those who have a low CD4 count or are not regularly taking HIV medication) or other conditions that weaken their immune system are at increased risk of severe illness and complications from MPV. People who are pregnant, or have a history of atopic dermatitis (eczema) or certain other skin conditions may also be at increased risk for severe illness.

What can I do to protect myself?

While the current outbreak continues, the best way to protect yourself from MPV is to avoid sex and other intimate contact with multiple or anonymous partners. You should also consider getting vaccinated

against MPV if you may have been exposed or may be in the future. For more information about vaccination, including recommendations on who should get vaccinated, visit nyc.gov/mpv.

If you choose to have sex or other intimate contact, the following can help reduce your risk, even if you have been vaccinated:

- Reduce your number of partners, especially those you do not know or whose recent sexual history you do not know.
- Avoid sex parties, circuit parties and other spaces where people are having sex and other intimate contact with multiple people.
- Ask your partners whether they have MPV symptoms and about their recent sexual history. Remember, some people may not know they have MPV, especially if they have only mild symptoms or symptoms that may be confused with other conditions.
- Do not have sex or intimate contact with anyone who feels unwell, especially if they have a rash or sores or were recently exposed to MPV.
- If you choose to have sex or other intimate contact with someone while you or they are sick, cover all rashes and sores with clothing or sealed bandages. This may reduce spread from contact with the rash or sores, but other methods of transmission may still be possible.
- Since it may be possible the virus can be transmitted through semen, use latex condoms during sex.
- Do not share towels, clothing, fetish gear, sex toys or toothbrushes.
- Wash your hands, fetish gear and bedding. Sex toys should be washed after each use.

What should I do if I have symptoms?

If you have MPV symptoms, even if they are mild:

- Call your health care provider immediately. If you do not have one, call **311** to get connected to an NYC Health + Hospitals (H+H) location or to access **H+H Virtual Express Care**. Your provider can test you for monkeypox and may be able to prescribe treatment. You can also visit nyc.gov/health/map to find a provider near you. Care is available in NYC regardless of immigration status, insurance coverage or ability to pay.
- Avoid all close physical contact with others, including people you live with. Also, avoid clubs, parties, bars and other crowded places.
- Learn more about how to take care of yourself and reduce the risk of spreading MPV to others at nyc.gov/mpv.

If you recently had MPV, use a latex condom during sex for at least eight weeks after your rash and sores have healed and a new layer of skin has developed — this will help protect your partners in case the virus can be transmitted by semen.

What should I do if someone I have been intimate with tells me they have MPV?

If you have been recently exposed to someone with MPV, you should get vaccinated. The JYNNEOS vaccine can reduce the risk of infection and severe illness if received shortly after an exposure. To find a vaccination site, visit vaccinefinder.nyc.gov. You should also watch for symptoms, especially a new rash or sores anywhere on your body. If you develop symptoms, follow the guidance in this document.

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

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