

Monkeypox and Safer Sex

Make informed choices when you are in situations or places where monkeypox could be spread.

Monkeypox is not considered a sexually transmitted disease, but it is often transmitted through close, sustained physical contact, which can include sexual contact.

Talk. Know the symptoms.

Make a habit of exchanging contact information with any new partner to allow for sexual health follow-up, if needed.

Talk with your partner about any monkeypox symptoms and **be aware of any new or unexplained rash or lesion on either of your bodies**, including the mouth, genitals (penis, testicles, vulva, or vagina), or anus (butthole).

If you or your partner has or recently had monkeypox symptoms, or you have a new or unexplained rash anywhere on your body, do not have sex and see a healthcare provider. In some cases, symptoms may be mild, and some people may not even know they have monkeypox.

If you or a partner has monkeypox or think you may have monkeypox, the best way to protect yourself and others is to avoid sex of any kind (oral, anal, vaginal) and kissing or touching each other's bodies—while you are sick. **Especially avoid touching any rash.** Do not share things like towels, fetish gear, sex toys, and toothbrushes.

Reduce your risk.

Even if you feel well, here are some ways to reduce your chances of being exposed to monkeypox if you are sexually active:

Limit your number of sex partners to reduce your likelihood of exposure.

Avoid kissing or exchanging spit, since monkeypox can spread this way.

Masturbate together at a distance, without touching each other and without touching any rash.

Consider having sex with your clothes on or covering areas where rash is present, reducing as much skin-to-skin contact as possible.

Remember to wash your hands, fetish gear, sex toys, and any fabrics (bedding, towels, clothes) after having sex.

Condoms (latex or polyurethane) may protect your anus (butthole), mouth, penis, or vagina from exposure to monkeypox. However, condoms alone may not prevent all exposures to monkeypox, since the rash can occur on other parts of the body.

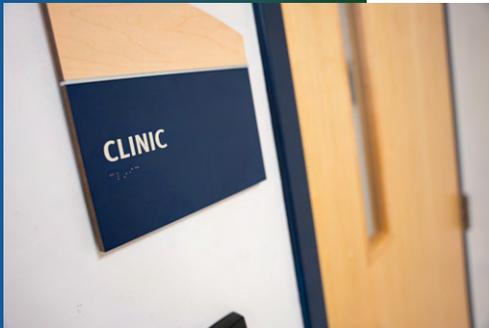
Gloves (latex, polyurethane, or nitrile) might also reduce the possibility of exposure if inserting fingers or hands into the vagina or the anus. The gloves must cover all exposed skin and be removed carefully to avoid touching the outer surface.

Have virtual sex with no in-person contact.

Vaccines.

Given the current limited supply of vaccine, consider temporarily changing some behaviors that may increase your risk of being exposed until vaccine supply is adequate.

Reducing or avoiding behaviors that increase risk of monkeypox exposure is also important when you are between your first and second shots of vaccine. Your protection will be highest two weeks after your second dose of vaccine.



What to do if you have a new or unexplained rash or other symptoms?

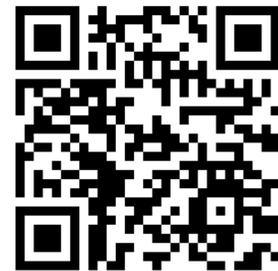
- Avoid sex or being intimate with anyone until you have been checked out by a healthcare provider.
- If you don't have a provider or health insurance, call 2-1-1 (1-877-211-8667).
- When you see a healthcare provider, wear a mask, and remind them that this virus is circulating in the area.
- Your healthcare provider can perform a test to confirm monkeypox infection. Testing includes swabbing a lesion and submitting to a commercial laboratory for analysis. Individuals will need to isolate while awaiting test results.
- Avoid gatherings, especially if they involve close, personal, skin-to-skin contact.



Stay informed.

Sign up for alerts from your health department. Scan the QR code with your phone or visit the link below:

<https://tcgov.co/HealthAlertList>



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tompkinscountyny.gov/health/monkeypox



Your Partner for a Healthy Community