

## Monkeypox Home Isolation Guidance

08/02/2022

If you have tested positive for monkeypox virus or if a healthcare provider or public health official has told you that monkeypox is suspected, please follow the home isolation instructions below in order to help prevent the disease from spreading to other people in your household and community.

### Isolation Instructions

**Current data suggests that people can spread monkeypox from the time symptoms start until all symptoms are resolved. Therefore, people with monkeypox should ideally isolate until the rash has fully resolved, the scabs have fallen off, and a fresh layer of intact skin has formed. This can take up to 2-4 weeks in most cases.**

#### During your isolation period:

- **Stay home except to get medical care**
  - Do not go outside your home unless you need medical care or in the event of an emergency, such as a fire. Do not go to work, school, or public areas, and do not use public transportation, Uber/Lyft, or taxis.
    - If you feel ill and need medical care during your isolation period and it is not a medical emergency, please contact your provider prior to arriving at the office to inform them that you have monkeypox and need care so that they can take appropriate precautions to protect staff and other patients.
    - If it is not an emergency, you should also contact DPH at 1-866-PUB-HLTH to make public health aware of your visit during your isolation period.
  - If you have a medical emergency, please call 911, but make sure to inform them that you have or may have monkeypox and need emergency medical care. Please follow up the 911 call with a call to DPH (1-866-PUB-HLTH) so we can provide guidance to 911 responders as necessary about health considerations during your care.
- **Separate yourself from other people in your home as much as possible**
  - You should stay separated from other people that live in your household as much as possible, especially if you have extensive lesions that cannot be easily covered, draining/weeping lesions, or respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, sore throat, runny nose).
  - You should stay alone in a separate bedroom from others and use a separate bathroom if possible. If it is not possible to use a separate bathroom, the bathroom should be disinfected after each use using the Disinfecting/Cleaning guidance below.

- Avoid sharing household items. Do not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, bedding, or other items with other people in your home. After using items for eating and drinking, you should wash them thoroughly with soap and water. See below section for Disinfecting/Cleaning on how to appropriately clean laundry.
- No visitors should be allowed to visit your residence until a medical professional has confirmed you are no longer contagious.
  
- **If you must be in the same room as other people in your household**
  - Wear a well-fitting face mask
    - If you are not able to wear a face mask (for example, because it causes trouble breathing), then people who live with you should not stay in the same room with you, or they should wear a face mask if they enter your room and try to keep 6 feet or more apart from you.
  - Cover skin lesions
    - You should cover skin lesions to the best extent possible (e.g., long sleeves, long pants, gloves) to minimize risk of contact with others.
  
- **Appropriate hygiene**
  - Hand hygiene (i.e., hand washing with soap and water or use of an alcohol-based hand rub) should be performed by infected persons and household contacts after touching lesion material, clothing, linens, or surfaces that may have had contact with lesion material.
  
- **Separate yourself from animals in your home as much as possible**
  - Avoid contact with animals (specifically mammals), including pets.
    - If possible, friends or family members should care for healthy animals until the owner has fully recovered.
    - Keep any potentially infectious bandages, textiles (such as clothes, bedding) and other items away from pets, other domestic animals, and wildlife.
    - In general, any mammal may become infected with monkeypox. It is not thought that other animals such as reptiles, fish or birds can be infected.
  - If you notice an animal that had contact with an infected person appears sick (such as lethargy, lack of appetite, coughing, bloating, nasal or eye secretions or crust, fever, rash) contact the owner/pet's veterinarian and local public health who will help to engage the appropriate state animal health officials to coordinate follow up.
  
- If you are unable to remain fully isolated throughout your illness, please see CDC guidance on steps to take to protect others while you still have a rash:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/clinicians/isolation-procedures.html>.

- **Please note that if you have any respiratory symptoms including sore throat, nasal congestion or cough, you MUST remain in isolation.** The exception to leave isolation early only applies to individuals whose only symptom is a rash.

### **Disinfecting/Cleaning**

- Detailed guidance from CDC for household cleaning and disinfection of monkeypox virus can be found here: <https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/specific-settings/home-disinfection.html>
- Clean “high-touch” surfaces frequently (e.g., doorknobs, phones). Use an EPA-registered disinfectant with an emerging viral pathogens claim (see link to CDC guidance above). Labels contain instructions for safe and effective use of the cleaning product including precautions you should take when applying the product, such as wearing gloves and making sure you have good ventilation during use of the product.
  - If a person who does not have monkeypox is disinfecting areas where a person with monkeypox has been, they should wear at minimum, disposable gloves and a respiratory or well-fitting mask. Standard clothing that fully covers the skin should also be worn and immediately laundered.
- Laundry (e.g., bedding, towels, clothing) may be washed in a standard washing machine with warm water and detergent; bleach may be added but is not necessary.
  - Care should be used when handling soiled laundry to avoid direct contact with contaminated material.
  - Soiled laundry should not be shaken or otherwise handled in a manner that may disperse infectious particles.
- The person with monkeypox should use a dedicated, lined trash can in the room where they are isolating. Contain and dispose of contaminated waste that have been in direct contact with the skin (such as dressings and bandages) in a sealed plastic bag in the dedicated trash can. Wear gloves when removing the garbage bags and handling of the trash.
- Once out of isolation, a final disinfection of the living area you stayed in while contagious should be completed following the CDC guidelines.

### **Notifying Close Contacts**

If you have had close contact with someone since you developed symptoms of monkeypox, and you think they may have been exposed to the virus, let them know that they will be contacted by public health with post exposure guidance. Please share information with public health about your close contacts so that persons who may benefit from post-exposure vaccination may be identified and contacted as quickly as possible. Until they hear from public health, please instruct your contacts to monitor their temperature twice daily. If symptoms (e.g., new skin rash, fever, chills, swollen lymph nodes) develop, they should immediately self-isolate and contact their healthcare provider. If they do not have a healthcare provider, they can contact their [local health district](#) or call 1-866-PUB-HLTH (1-866-782-4584) for further guidance.



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Information on monitoring and levels of exposure/risk levels can be found at:

<https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/clinicians/monitoring.html>

**Additional Information**

- Georgia DPH Monkeypox Website: <https://dph.georgia.gov/monkeypox>
- CDC Monkeypox Website:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/response/2022/index.html>

If you have questions, please email [contactpublichealth@dph.ga.gov](mailto:contactpublichealth@dph.ga.gov) or call 1-866-PUB-HLTH (1-866-782-4584) to reach the Georgia Department of Public Health.

*We protect lives.*