

Guidance for Individuals Who Have Been Exposed to Monkeypox

What should I do if I have been exposed to someone with monkeypox?

If you have been exposed to someone with monkeypox, you should monitor your health for 21 days after your last exposure. This includes taking your temperature with a thermometer twice a day (morning and night) and checking to see if you have any signs or symptoms of monkeypox. Someone from the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (DPH) will contact you by phone or email once a day for those 21 days to check your temperature and see how you are feeling. If you develop symptoms (see below), please be prepared to isolate yourself from others.

What signs and/or symptoms should I look out for?

People with monkeypox sometimes develop a flu-like illness with fever (a temperature of 100.4°F or 38.0°C or greater), fatigue, and enlarged lymph nodes followed by a rash. In other instances, people just develop a rash with or without swollen lymph nodes, which can occur anywhere on the body including the mouth, palms, soles and the genitals. People usually develop monkeypox 7 to 14 days (and up to 21 days) after being exposed.

Do I have to avoid any activities?

If you have no symptoms you are permitted to continue routine daily activities (e.g., go to work, school). However, you should not donate blood, cells, tissue, breast milk, semen, or organs during your 21-day symptom monitoring period.

What should I do if I develop signs or symptoms of monkeypox?

Please isolate at home if you develop any signs or symptoms of monkeypox. Report all signs and symptoms that you are experiencing to your DPH point of contact. Testing for monkeypox can only be performed by the DPH.

Monkeypox virus can spread through contact with body fluids, monkeypox sores, items that have been contaminated with fluids or sores (clothing, bedding, etc.), or through respiratory droplets following prolonged face-to-face contact.

Please isolate in a private room and avoid close contact with others in your household. If you do not have a private space to isolate, both you and your household members should wear a surgical mask, if feasible. Other individuals who do not reside in your household should not visit while you are isolating. If you need to seek healthcare, please call your doctor's office or hospital in advance to let them know you have been exposed to monkeypox. DPH will let you know when you can stop isolating and will provide further instructions.

What will happen if I am diagnosed with monkeypox?

If you are tested and diagnosed with monkeypox, you will be required to isolate at home until all of your rash lesions have resolved, the scabs have fallen off, and a fresh layer of skin has formed. While you are isolating, you should not leave your home unless it is required for medical care. If you need to seek healthcare while you are isolating, please call your doctor's office or hospital in advance to let them know you have been diagnosed with monkeypox. DPH will work with you to determine when you can stop isolating.