



Serving the Towns of Alford, Great Barrington, Lee, Lenox,  
Monterey, Mount Washington,  
New Marlborough, Otis, Sheffield and Stockbridge

***Mission:** "To leverage partnerships, provide quality public health services and directly improve the health and well-being of the entire community."*

*Updated: 7/28/22*

## **What is Monkeypox?**

It's a rare disease caused by infection with the monkeypox virus. Monkeypox virus is part of the same family of viruses as smallpox. Monkeypox symptoms are similar to smallpox symptoms, but milder; and monkeypox is rarely fatal. Monkeypox is not related to chickenpox.

- As of July 27, 2022 there have been no confirmed cases yet in Berkshire County
- There have been 113 confirmed cases in Massachusetts

## **How serious is Monkeypox?**

In the U.S., there have been no deaths associated with monkeypox so far. About 10% of patients have been hospitalized to manage pain associated with the rash. Most people recover in 2-4 weeks.

## **What are the possible symptoms of Monkeypox?**

Some symptoms may develop before others, or not at all. A rash is the most common symptom.

- Rash: May appear as pimples or blisters on the face, inside the mouth, on the hands, feet, chest, genitals, or anus
- Flu-like symptoms: Fever, chills, headache, muscle aches, swollen lymph nodes, exhaustion
- Respiratory symptoms: Sore throat, nasal congestion, cough

## **How does Monkeypox spread?**

People who do not have monkeypox symptoms cannot spread the virus to others. But for those that do have symptoms, it spreads person-to-person, in several possible ways:

- Direct contact with the infectious rash, scabs, or body fluids
- Respiratory secretions during prolonged, face-to-face contact, or during intimate physical contact, such as kissing, cuddling, or sex
- Touching items (such as clothing, towels, bedding) that previously touched the infectious rash or body fluids
- Through the placenta, pregnant people can spread the virus to their fetus

## **What should I do if I have symptoms and suspect Monkeypox?**

So far, about 95% of monkeypox cases during this current outbreak have occurred among adult men who recently had sex with men, although it is not currently considered a sexually transmitted disease because of the various routes of transmission. Anyone can get monkeypox via the routes listed above – especially if a household member is symptomatic.

- If you have a known or likely exposure and have developed symptoms, you need to isolate at home until advised by a medical professional
- If you must go out, cover your rash and wear a well-fitting mask
- Contact your medical provider for assessment and lab testing, if appropriate

## **What should I do if I had a known contact with someone who has Monkeypox?**

- Watch for symptoms. It can take up to 3 weeks for symptoms to begin.
- Consider vaccination. When administered before or within 2 weeks of exposure, the JYNNEOS vaccine can help protect against monkeypox illness or reduce severity of symptoms. The vaccine consists of 2 shots, 28 days apart.

## **Who is currently eligible for Monkeypox vaccination in Massachusetts?**

- Anyone that had a sexual partner in the past 14 days who was diagnosed with monkeypox
- Anyone that had multiple sexual partners in the past 14 days in a jurisdiction with known monkeypox cases

## **Where could I get the Monkeypox vaccine if I'm eligible?**

The vaccine sites closest to Berkshire County are:

- BMC Brightwood Health Center in Springfield, call 413-794-4458 for an appt
- Tapestry Health in Springfield, call 413-586-2016 ext. 121 for an appt

## **Online resources:**

<https://www.mass.gov/monkeypox>

<https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/response/2022/index.html>