

Patient Instructions for Awaiting Monkeypox Laboratory Results

Monkeypox is a rash illness that is caused by infection with monkeypox virus. If you are awaiting test results for monkeypox, please take care to prevent spreading the illness to others by following the recommendations below.

Transmission

Monkeypox spreads between people through direct contact with infectious body fluids or sores, and indirect contact with sores, such as through contaminated clothing or linens. Transmission also occurs through large respiratory droplets. Respiratory droplets generally cannot travel more than a few feet, so prolonged face-to-face contact is required. Monkeypox can spread during intimate contact between people, including during sex, as well as activities like kissing, cuddling, or touching parts of the body with monkeypox sores.

While awaiting monkeypox test result:

- Self-isolate to your home except as required for follow-up medical care.
- Take a break from sex and going out to bars, gyms, clubs, and other events.
- Skin lesions should be covered to the best extent possible (e.g., long sleeves, long pants) to minimize risk of contact with others.
- When possible, isolate in a room or area separate from other family members and pets. This is especially important if you have extensive lesions that cannot be easily covered, draining/weeping lesions, **or** respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, sore throat, runny nose).
- Disposable gloves should be worn for direct contact with lesions and disposed of after use.
- Household members who are not ill should limit contact with the person who is ill and avoid skin to skin contact, including sexual contact. Use particular care in avoiding contact with household members who are immune compromised, pregnant, or under the age of 18.
- Wear a surgical mask, especially if you have respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath, sore throat). If this is not feasible (e.g., if the ill person is a child), other household members should consider wearing a surgical mask when in the presence of the ill person.
- Avoid contact with animals, including pets. Other household members should care for pets when possible.
- Think about the people you have had close, personal, or sexual contact within the last 21 days, including people you met through dating apps. You might be asked to share this information if you have receive a monkeypox diagnosis, to help stop the spread.

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If the test result is positive:

- Continue to self-isolate and follow the recommendations above until all lesions have crusted over, fallen off and a fresh layer of skin has formed. This is when you are no longer contagious.
- You will receive a call from public health to talk about who you may have had close contact with since you have been contagious. Public health will make recommendations to those people to prevent them from becoming ill.

Proper Hand Hygiene and Cleaning Procedures

- Hand hygiene (i.e., hand washing with soap and water or use of an alcohol-based hand rub) should be used by ill people and their household contacts after touching lesion material, clothing, linens, or environmental surfaces that may have had contact with lesion material.
- 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.
- Dishes and other eating utensils should not be shared. It is not necessary for the ill person to use separate utensils if properly washed. Soiled dishes and eating utensils should be washed in a dishwasher or by hand with warm water and soap.
- Contaminated surfaces should be cleaned and disinfected. Standard household cleaning/disinfectants may be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
 - See [general guidance on cleaning and disinfecting non-healthcare settings](#) such as homes and cars where an individual with monkeypox spent significant time.

If the test result is negative: This means you very likely are not sick with monkeypox. Follow any prevention recommendations made by your provider or public health department based on test results and diagnoses made.

Additional Resources:

- <https://ldh.la.gov/page/monkeypox>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/>