

# HOME ISOLATION INSTRUCTIONS FOR PEOPLE WITH MPOX



## Who this guidance is for:

The following isolation instructions are for **people who are suspected to have or have been diagnosed with mpox infection** and do not require hospitalization or who have been discharged from the hospital and may isolate using protective measures.

It is important to follow the advice in this guidance. By self-isolating, you are protecting others and preventing the spread of infection.

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## About Mpox?

Infection spreads between people mainly through direct (skin-to-skin) contact with mpox lesions, including sexual contact, or prolonged close contact via respiratory droplets containing the mpox virus. Infection may also be spread via contaminated objects such as shared linens, household toiletries, and soft furnishings.

An individual with mpox is considered infectious to others from the time when their symptoms start, until their lesions have scabbed over, the scabs have fallen off and a fresh layer of skin has formed underneath. This may take several weeks.

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## How to isolate safely if you have mpox infection:

If you are suspected of having mpox or have been diagnosed with monkeypox infection, you are advised to self-isolate.

### You should self-isolate until:

- ① You have not had a fever (a temperature of 100.4°F or 38.0°C or greater) for at least 72 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicine AND;
- ② Any respiratory symptoms, including sore throat, nasal congestion, or cough have resolved AND;
- ③ You have had no new lesions in the previous 48 hours AND;
- ④ All your lesions have scabbed over, and a fresh layer of skin has formed underneath including any lesions in your mouth.

If you meet **ALL** the criteria above, you may be able to stop self-isolating.

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It is recommended that people with mpox remain isolated for the duration of illness, but that might not be possible in all situations. Prioritizing isolation and prevention strategies helps prevent transmission while balancing the impact of this infection on the daily lives of people diagnosed with mpox.

## **If a person with mpox is unable to remain fully isolated throughout the illness, they should do the following:**

- While symptomatic with a fever or any respiratory symptoms, including sore throat, nasal congestion, or cough, remain isolated in the home and away from others unless it is necessary to see a health care provider or for an emergency. This includes avoiding close or physical contact with other people and animals.
  - If you need to leave your home or self-isolating site to see a health care provider or for any emergency cover any lesions, wear a well-fitting mask (more information below), and avoid public transportation

## **Once your respiratory symptoms and fever have resolved you can leave for essential purposes such as going to the grocery store, pharmacy or other necessary services.**

- If you need to leave self-isolating location:
  - Cover all parts of the rash with clothing, gloves and/or bandages.
  - Wear a well-fitting mask to prevent the wearer from spreading oral and respiratory secretions when interacting with others until the rash and all other symptoms have resolved.
  - Masks should fit closely on the face without any gaps along the edges or around the nose and be comfortable when worn properly over the nose and mouth.

Keep the time spent outside your self-isolating location as short as possible and try and avoid contact with objects such as furniture in public spaces. If you need to attend hospital or medical appointments, you should drive yourself there. If you do not have your own vehicle, public transport or ride share can be used but you should try and avoid busy periods, cover any lesions and wear a face covering.

Ask friends or relatives to help with buying groceries, other essentials or collecting medication, or order them online. Friends, relatives and delivery drivers should leave items outside and should not come inside. They should not touch anything that you have touched.

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## **Avoid close contact with people you live with:**

People who live in the same household as someone with mpox, and who have had sexual, intimate, or close skin to skin contact (for example frequent touching or cuddling), or who have shared bedding clothes or towels with the person with mpox are at the highest risk of becoming infected themselves because they are most likely to have prolonged close contact.

You should limit close contact with others in your household and take the following steps to help reduce the chance of passing your infection on to the people you live with. Until all signs and symptoms of mpox infection has fully resolved:

1. Sleep in a separate room, if available, and do not share bedding.
2. Avoid oral, anal, and vaginal sex, or touching the genitals or anus.
3. Avoid hugging, massaging, kissing, or talking closely (approximately 3 hours or more) with others.
4. Use a separate bathroom from the rest of your household, if available – if you do not have a separate bathroom, follow the household cleaning instructions.
5. Do not share items that have been worn or handled with other people or animals.
6. Make sure you use separate towels from other people in your home.
7. Launder or disinfect items that have been worn or handled and surfaces that have been touched by a lesion.
8. Avoid sharing utensils or cups. Items should be cleaned and disinfected before use by others.
9. Avoid crowds and congregate settings.
10. Clean your hands frequently throughout the day by washing with soap and water for 20 seconds (care should be taken if there are extensive or ulcerated hand lesions) or use alcohol-based hand sanitizers.

If you need to spend time in the same room as someone in your household, you should cover all lesions, and minimize physical contact. In addition, the person with monkeypox and the contact (for children over 2 years of age) should wear a well-fitting surgical face mask or respirator when interaction is unavoidable. It is particularly important to avoid close prolonged contact with young children, pregnant women and immunosuppressed people as they may be at higher risk of serious illness.

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## Resuming sexual activity:

While you are self-isolating you are advised to refrain from sexual activity to reduce the risk of passing the infection on to your partner.

It is not known how long the mpox virus remains present in semen and other genital excretions. Safe sex, barrier practices (i.e., wearing condoms) are recommended for a period of time after completing isolation but there is little data to support the length of time patients need to wear condoms. Some experts are recommending use of condoms for a minimum of 8 weeks after completing isolation. As public health experts learn more about monkeypox transmission this guidance will be updated.

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## Cleaning, disinfection, and waste disposal:

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. Soiled laundry should not be shaken or otherwise handled in a manner that may disperse infectious particles.

Do not share dishes and other eating utensils. It is not necessary for the infected person to use separate utensils if they are properly washed before use by others. 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, follow all manufacturer directions for use.

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## Pets:

No cases of mpox in pets have been reported in the US that have been associated with the 2022 mpox outbreak, but it is possible that pets could become infected or contaminated with the virus through close contact with an infected person and spread the virus to others.

If you need to walk your pet outside, make sure the rash on your body is completely covered for example by wearing a long-sleeved top and full-length pants and wear a well-fitting surgical face mask or a double-layered face covering while you are outside your home.