



## Information for close contacts of mpox

You have been given this factsheet as you have had close contact with someone who has mpox.

### What is mpox?

Mpox (previously known as monkeypox) is a viral illness, that has been increasing globally, including in Australia, since 2022.

Mpox is usually a mild illness, with most people recovering fully within 2 to 4 weeks, but some people can become very unwell.

### How does mpox spread?

Mpox can be spread by direct, intimate, and very close contact with someone with mpox, including through:

- skin-to-skin contact (e.g. touching, anal, oral or vaginal sex)
- prolonged face-to-face contact (e.g. talking, singing, breathing)
- mouth-to-mouth contact (e.g. kissing)
- contact with contaminated materials (e.g. clothing, linen, towels, or surfaces).

People with mpox may be infectious (be able to pass the mpox virus on to others) up to four days before symptoms start, and until all lesions have crusted, scabs have fallen off, and new skin has formed underneath.

### Why am I a close contact?

You are considered a close contact because you have had close interaction with someone who has mpox, and you may be at risk of developing mpox.

### What can I do to prevent mpox?

Vaccination against mpox is available and is generally recommended as a preventative measure for people at higher risk of developing mpox because of lifestyle or occupational risk factors.

Vaccination is also recommended after exposure to a person with mpox and is most effective at preventing mpox if given within 4 days of contact with the infected person. However, it can still reduce the severity of infection if given within 5 to 14 days of contact.

Your public health unit will discuss the risks and benefits of vaccination with you and will advise whether you should be vaccinated.

### What do I need to do?

It can take up to 21 days for people to develop mpox symptoms after having close contact with someone with mpox. Public health will advise when your monitoring period is over.

**For 21 days** from your last contact with a person who has mpox or until advised by public health:

- Monitor for symptoms of mpox. This includes taking your temperature with a thermometer morning and evening.
- If you develop symptoms of mpox, including a temperature of 38°C or above, stay at home, avoid others, and contact your public health unit for further advice about testing for mpox.
- If you need to seek urgent medical attention, contact the emergency department or general practice ahead of time to let them know you are coming. Wear a surgical mask, cover any rash and lesions, and take this factsheet with you.

**In a medical emergency always seek immediate health care or phone 000.**



**To reduce the risk of giving mpox to other people, for 21 days** from your last contact with a person who has mpox, or until advised by public health:

- Wash your hands frequently using soap and warm water or an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Cover your mouth and nose when sneezing and coughing with paper tissues. Put used tissues into a rubbish bag and wash hands.
- If you work in a childcare, aged or disability care home, or healthcare setting, do not attend work if you have any symptoms.
- Do not have sex (including genital touching, vaginal, anal, and oral sex).
- Avoid childcare and aged care facilities (unless you work there); avoid healthcare facilities unless seeking medical attention.
- Avoid contact with young children, older people, immunocompromised people, and pregnant people.
- Do not donate blood, cells, tissue, breast milk, semen, or organs.

Your public health unit may provide additional advice on avoiding physical contact with others, working from home or wearing a surgical mask when outside the home including in the workplace. This will depend on your level of contact with a case of mpox and the type of workplace.

## Symptoms of mpox

Symptoms of mpox can start 3 to 21 days after contact with a person with mpox, but most commonly starts at around 8 days.

Symptoms can include:

- a rash or skin lesion(s) on any part of the body
- fever or chills
- headache
- muscle or joint aches
- backache
- sore throat
- swollen lymph nodes
- tiredness
- anal and/or rectal pain
- bloody stools or diarrhoea
- pain while passing urine.

The rash can appear as lesions like pimples, blisters, or sores, which can then burst to form ulcers or scabs. These can vary in size and number (from one to many).

People who have received a vaccine for mpox may experience a milder illness.

## How will I be contacted by public health?

You may be contacted regularly by public health staff to check on your temperature and any new symptoms. This may be by phone, email, or text message.

## Who do I contact if I have symptoms or questions?

You should contact your local public health unit:

[https://www.health.wa.gov.au/articles/a\\_e/contact-details-for-public-health-units](https://www.health.wa.gov.au/articles/a_e/contact-details-for-public-health-units)

More information is available at [Mpox \(monkeypox\) \(healthywa.wa.gov.au\)](https://www.health.wa.gov.au/articles/a_e/contact-details-for-public-health-units)