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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>