

NEW JERSEY AIDS/HIV/STD HOTLINE

PRESS RELEASE
September 2022

Monkeypox (hMPXV) in New Jersey

(New Jersey) – As monkeypox (hMPXV) cases continue to rise in New Jersey and across the country, public health agencies both locally and nationally are hard at work promoting the importance of monkeypox (hMPXV) treatment, vaccinations, and stopping the spread of misinformation.

The monkeypox (hMPXV) virus causes a rare illness that can affect **anyone**, regardless of age, gender identity, or sexual orientation. The virus is passed through [close or personal/sexual contact](#) with someone sick with monkeypox (hMPXV). Although the monkeypox (hMPXV) virus is related to smallpox (same family of viruses), they are different from one another.

[People sick with monkeypox](#) (hMPXV) typically experience swollen glands (lymph nodes), fever, flu-like symptoms, and a rash (look similar to pimples or blisters; can be itchy or painful) that starts on the face and spreads to other areas of the body. Monkeypox (hMPXV) cannot be spread to others by passing someone on the street, at the park, or in a store — there must be direct contact with skin, respiratory fluids, or surfaces/fabrics used by someone with monkeypox (hMPXV).

Illness from the monkeypox (hMPXV) virus usually lasts about 2-4 weeks and is rarely fatal. The virus can be passed to others from the time symptoms first appear to when the rash has fully healed — no more scabs and a new layer of skin appears.

Although most people sick with monkeypox (hMPXV) experience mild illness, people who are pregnant or breastfeeding and those with skin conditions or weakened immune systems can experience serious illness or complications related to the virus. People who are pregnant can pass the monkeypox (hMPXV) virus to their unborn child.

You should visit a healthcare provider and get tested for monkeypox (hMPXV) if you:

- are sick with symptoms of monkeypox (hMPXV)
- think you may be sick with monkeypox (hMPXV)
- have been exposed to someone sick with monkeypox (hMPXV)
- have an unexplained rash that is itchy or painful

“The New Jersey Department of Health ([NJDOH](#)) is working in conjunction with CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) and local health departments to quickly identify monkeypox (hMPXV) cases and

close contacts, provide treatment and vaccine, and further prevent the spread of disease. CDC is working with state and local health officials to monitor probable and confirmed cases within the country.”¹

Monkeypox (hMPXV) cases in New Jersey remain relatively low, however, suspected and confirmed cases increase daily as the virus continues to spread. Getting vaccinated against monkeypox (hMPXV) is an important step in stopping the further spread of the virus. The NJDOH is providing monkeypox (hMPXV) vaccines at no cost to eligible individuals. [Click here](#) for an up-to-date list of vaccine locations across NJ.

Data from the current monkeypox (hMPXV) outbreak both nationally and in New Jersey shows the greatest impact of the virus is within the social and sexual networks of gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men. This does not mean monkeypox (hMPXV) only affects LGBTQ+ communities.

It's important to combat misinformation about monkeypox (hMPXV) to prevent stigma against LGBTQ+ communities. Monkeypox (hMPXV) is not an illness of sexual orientation, it's an illness of close or personal/sexual contact with a person who has monkeypox (hMPXV). Anyone exposed to the monkeypox (hMPXV) virus is at risk of illness.

[CDC](#) and [New Jersey](#) data for 2022 monkeypox (hMPXV)

[Click here](#) for NJDOH resources and educational materials on monkeypox (hMPXV).

If you think you have been exposed to someone with monkeypox (hMPXV) or have noticed flu-like symptoms accompanied by a rash, it is important to see a healthcare provider. Contact the NJ Health Hotline (1-866-221-2611) to answer questions and provide information about monkeypox (hMPXV).

Get vaccinated for monkeypox (hMPXV) if you are eligible.

New Jersey offers free HIV and STI services to all state residents via the NJ AIDS/HIV/STD Hotline. Knowing who to call for resources and information is the first step in ending the HIV epidemic in New Jersey. The hotline is staffed by health professionals (doctors, nurses, and pharmacists) available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to provide free, confidential help: Call: 1-800-624-2377 or [Chat Here](#)

- Referrals for testing, prevention, treatment, and other related services
- Prevention and treatment information for HIV, hepatitis and, other STIs
- Information on the side effects of medicines used to treat HIV and other STIs
- Referrals to PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis) and PEP (post-exposure prophylaxis) services

¹ The New Jersey Department of Health: [Monkeypox \(hMPXV\) Overview](#)

- Counseling and treatment locations
- Referrals to harm reduction centers (syringe access available)
- Partner notification services
- New Jersey's AIDS Drug Distribution Program ([ADDP](#))

Connect with NJ AIDS/HIV/STD Hotline    (clickable)

New Jersey AIDS/HIV/STD Hotline

Healthcare professionals (doctors, nurses and pharmacists) provide telephone consultation for people seeking information about HIV/AIDS, pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP), and other sexually transmitted infections (STI) including hepatitis. Callers receive information tailored to their needs; discussion about prevention, referrals for testing sites and other related services, counseling and testing locations, and information on treatment and adverse reactions to medications. The hotline is administered by the New Jersey Poison Control Center and funded by the New Jersey Department of Health, Division of HIV, STD, and TB services.

Rutgers New Jersey Medical School

Founded in 1954, Rutgers New Jersey Medical School is the oldest school of medicine in the state. Today it is part of Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey and graduates approximately 170 physicians a year. In addition to providing the MD degree, the school offers MD/PhD, MD/MPH and MD/MBA degrees through collaborations with other institutions of higher education. Dedicated to excellence in education, research, clinical care and community outreach, the medical school comprises 20 academic departments and works with several healthcare partners, including its principal teaching hospital, University Hospital. Its faculty consists of numerous world-renowned scientists and many of the region's "top doctors." Home to the nation's oldest student-run clinic, New Jersey Medical School hosts more than 50 centers and institutes, including the Public Health Research Institute Center, the Global Tuberculosis Institute and the Neurological Institute of New Jersey. For more information please visit: njms.rutgers.edu.

###