

# Mpox

## Fact sheet

### What is mpox?

Mpox is an infection caused by the *monkeypox virus*. Since May 2022, there has been an increase in mpox infections in countries where the illness is not usually seen, including Australia.

People at highest risk of mpox in NSW are men who have sex with men, particularly those having sex overseas or with overseas travellers.

### What are the symptoms of mpox?

Symptoms usually begin 7-14 days after exposure (but this can be as short as a few days or as long as 21 days).

Some people get early symptoms such as:

- Fever
- Headache
- Muscle aches and back ache
- Chills
- Exhaustion
- Swollen lymph nodes.

Usual symptoms include:

- rashes, pimple-like lesions or sores, particularly in areas that are hard to see such as the genitals, anus or buttocks
- ulcers, lesions or sores in the mouth.

People with mpox are infectious from when they first get symptoms until all the lesions have crusted, the scabs have fallen off and a fresh layer of skin has formed underneath.

Most people with mpox get better within a few weeks without requiring any specific treatment.

### How does mpox spread?

Mpox can spread through:

- direct skin to skin contact with rashes, blisters or sores on the skin
- semen and other bodily fluids

- contaminated objects, such as bedding or clothes
- breathing in droplets breathed out by someone who has mpox, but this is rare.

---

## How do I protect myself from mpox?

There is a [vaccine](#) to protect against mpox called JYNNEOS. It is free and recommended in NSW for eligible groups of people. [Learn more](#) about the vaccine.

Other ways to protect yourself from mpox:

- Avoiding close contact with people who have mpox or mpox symptoms
- Avoiding contact with infected materials, such as bedding or towels
- Exchanging contact information with sexual partners, so that if a partner develops mpox you can be contacted and offered vaccination to prevent mpox (post-exposure prophylaxis)
- Practicing good hand hygiene.

---

## How is mpox diagnosed and treated?

Mpox is diagnosed by laboratory testing of blister fluid or scabs.

Most people with mpox can manage it at home by staying hydrated and taking over-the-counter pain medicines. Their doctor or treating clinician may also monitor them.

People who get really sick may need to go to hospital. They could be given intravenous fluids and treatment to control fever or pain, or antiviral medicines.

---

## Further information

Call your doctor or local sexual health clinic right away if you think you might have mpox symptoms. In an emergency call Triple Zero (000) immediately. Wear a mask if you are going to the clinic.

If you have questions about mpox, call the NSW Sexual Health Infolink on 1800 451 624.

For free help in your language, call the Translating and Interpreting Service on 13 14 50.