



One minute guide to...

Monkeypox (mpox)

What is it?

Monkeypox (mpox) is a rare infection most commonly found in West and Central Africa that is caused by infection with mpox virus that does not spread easily between people so the risk of catching it is low even though there have been a few cases in the UK. Anyone can get mpox.

Mpox infection is usually mild, and most people recover within a few weeks without treatment. It usually takes between 5 and 21 days for symptoms to appear and these can include fever, headache, backache, swollen lymph nodes, chills and joint pain and fatigue. Within 1 to 5 days after the appearance of fever, a rash develops, often beginning on the face then spreading to other parts of the body.

How does mpox spread from person-to-person?

- direct contact with mpox skin lesions or scabs (including during sexual contact, kissing, cuddling, or holding hands) and contact with/sharing clothing or linens (such as bedding or towels) used by an infected person.
- coughing or sneezing of an individual close to you with a mpox rash

In parts of west and central Africa, mpox can also be caught from infected rodents (such as rats, mice, and squirrels) if: you're bitten; touch their fur, skin, body fluids, scabs etc; or eat their meat if not cooked thoroughly.

Actions to take if you have a case in your setting:

Cases of mpox are very rare amongst children in the UK and symptoms of illness are likely to be caused by something else. However if you have an individual in your setting who may be at increased risk of mpox (i.e. because they are a known close contact), please follow this advice:

Send children home if they are unwell and/or they have a rash with blisters. Advise parents and carers to seek advice from their GP and/or call 111 for advice if they think their child may have mpox.

Increase good hygiene measures to reduce spread for example:

- Encourage staff and children to wash their hands regularly with soap and water.
- Encourage covering of the nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. Tissues should be disposed of immediately, and hands washed with soap and water.
- Increase cleaning of surfaces that could be contaminated including desks and shared items such as iPads and toys.

Children/staff can return to school and stop self-isolating if they have not had a high temperature for at least 72 hours, no new lesions for 2 days; and lesions have all scabbed over, scabs have fallen off and a fresh layer of skin has formed underneath. This will need to be confirmed by their GP and then they may return covering any scabs that are left.

Please email UKHSA Health Protection Team Northwest at: cl.hpt@ukhsa.gov.uk or phone 0344 225 0562 if you have any further queries.

Further Information:

General advice: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/monkeypox>;

NHS: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/monkeypox/>

Self-isolation advice: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/guidance-for-people-with-monkeypox-infection-who-are-isolating-at-home>

This guide has been produced by Education IPC, Public Health & Communities Team in Cumbria March 24



Working for Cumberland Council and
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