

Last updated: June 30, 2023

Thank you for helping the Vermont Department of Health raise awareness of mpox (previously referred to as hMPXV or human monkeypox virus) by sharing fact-based, non-stigmatizing information to people in Vermont.

This partner toolkit provides sample language from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Health Department to share with your patients, clients, constituents and community members on mpox in the U.S. Please consider using these toolkit resources at local events, in newsletters, on your social media pages and websites. We are grateful for your continued partnership in providing Vermonters with the information they need to protect themselves and others.

Learn more at [CDC.gov/monkeypox](https://www.cdc.gov/monkeypox) and [HealthVermont.gov/mpox](https://www.healthvermont.gov/mpox).

Communication Resources:

Visit our [website](#) to find communication resources available for distribution, such as posters, videos and fact sheets translated into multiple languages. Visit the [CDC](#) for additional resources, including graphics and social media content.

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Talking Points

About Mpox

- Mpox (previously referred to as human monkeypox virus or hMPXV) is a disease caused by the mpox virus not commonly found in the U.S. Mpox is not a new virus.
- Starting in 2022, there have been cases of people infected with mpox in the U.S. and other countries, including Canada.
- The risk of infection in the U.S. and in Vermont remains LOW but the CDC expects cases to rise in spring and summer.
- Most people get better in two to four weeks without medical treatment.
- The most common symptom of illness from mpox is a rash, which may look like pimples, blisters or sores. It can also look like other more common rashes, such as chicken pox, syphilis or shingles.
- Other symptoms may include fever, headache, muscle aches and backache, swollen lymph nodes, chills and exhaustion.
- It is possible to only have a rash with no other symptoms.
- Symptoms can be very painful, and people might have permanent scarring from the rash.

How It Spreads

- Mpox is mainly spread through close, personal (often skin-to-skin) contact with someone who has an mpox infection.
 - Close contact includes direct contact with a rash, sores or scabs from someone who has a mpox infection.
 - While it is mainly spread through sexual encounters, it is possible to get mpox through non-sexual contact with sores or bodily fluids of someone infected.
 - Mpox can also spread through respiratory fluids like saliva when people have close, face-to-face contact (for example, when kissing, cuddling, having sex, or living with or caring for someone who is ill with mpox infection).
 - Touching objects, materials or surfaces that have come into contact with the body fluids or sores of someone infected and have not been disinfected is considered low risk.
- Mpox can be spread from the time symptoms start until all sores have healed and a fresh layer of skin has formed. This can take several weeks.
- While the current outbreak is spreading from person-to-person, people infected with mpox should avoid contact with animals while they are contagious.

Vaccination

- Vaccination is FREE and available to those at risk—regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity or immigration status.
- The JYNNEOS vaccine helps protect against mpox when given before or shortly after having close, personal contact with someone who is infected.
- The vaccine is two doses, given four weeks apart.
- It is recommended to get both doses for stronger protection against mpox. You can still get your second dose even if it has been more than four weeks since your first dose.
- Protection is highest two weeks after your second dose. Although no vaccine is 100% effective, getting vaccinated may help make the symptoms less severe, easier to manage, and prevent serious illness if you become infected.
- The CDC is still learning how long JYNNEOS vaccine protection lasts and if protection decreases over time.
- Talk to your health care provider or visit www.HealthVermont.gov/mpox for the latest vaccine eligibility, recommendations and locations in Vermont.

Treatment

- Treatment is available if you are diagnosed with mpox and your health care provider determines that you need it.
- Most people fully recover without treatment.

Risk of Exposure

- Anyone—regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation— who has been in close contact with someone infected with mpox is at risk.
- Some people are at higher risk of being exposed to someone infected with mpox and should get vaccinated. This includes people:
 - in certain social networks
 - who have multiple sexual partners or
 - who have been recently diagnosed with one or more sexually transmitted infections.

Visit HealthVermont.gov/mpox for more information on people at higher risk of exposure.

What Vermonters Can Do

- Get vaccinated against mpox (see talking points above).
- Talk to your health care provider if you have a rash that looks like mpox – even if they you have been previously vaccinated against mpox, had an mpox infection before, or don't think you have had contact with someone who was ill with mpox.
- If you feel sick or have any new or unexplained rashes or sores, please contact your health care provider.

- If you do not have a health care provider, call 2-1-1 to be connected to care, or contact the nearest [federally qualified health center](#) or one of [Vermont's Free & Referral Clinics](#).
- Seek out information from trusted sources, like your local health office or health care provider.
- Know the risks: consider how much close, personal, skin-to-skin contact is likely to occur at events you plan to attend.
 - Low risk: events like concerts where attendees are fully clothed and are unlikely to share skin-to-skin contact.
 - Some risk: events like raves, parties or clubs where there is minimal clothing and direct skin-to-skin contact.
 - Highest risk: enclosed spaces like saunas or sex clubs where there is minimal or no clothing and where intimate contact occurs.
- Lower your risk with sexual contacts: talk to your contacts about any recent illness and be aware of new or unexplained sores or rashes on your or your sexual contact's body. If there are any new or unexplained sores or rashes, or if either of you have areas of the skin that feel sore or tight, see a health care provider.

Samples and Templates

Email/Letter

[Please copy and paste into an email or your organization's letterhead or [download in Microsoft Word](#)]

Dear [NAME],

Mpox—previously referred to as monkeypox or hMPXV—continues to spread in the U.S. The overall risk to most people remains low, but the potential for mpox exposure and future outbreaks is still a concern. Take steps to protect yourself from mpox, including getting vaccinated if you are at risk.

Follow these tips from the Vermont Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to lower your risk of getting or spreading mpox:

- **Get vaccinated!** Vaccines are recommended for people at higher risk of being exposed to mpox. The vaccine is free, safe and effective in lowering your risk of infection or serious illness if you get mpox. Protection is highest after two vaccine doses are given four weeks apart.

Talk to your health care provider or visit HealthVermont.gov/mpox for more on vaccines and to locate a free vaccine near you.

- **Contact your health care provider if you feel sick or have a new or unexplained rash—** even if you've been vaccinated against mpox or have had a previous mpox infection.

Mpox can spread to anyone through close, personal contact with the rash, sores or scabs from a person sick with mpox infection. It is most often spread through sexual encounters, but it is possible to get mpox through non-sexual contact with sores or bodily fluids, like when hugging, massaging, kissing or prolonged face-to-face contact. Touching objects, fabrics and surfaces that have been used by someone with mpox and not disinfected is considered low risk.

Learn more about mpox, vaccine eligibility, recommendations and locations at HealthVermont.gov/mpox.

Newsletter Post

[\[Click to download this resource in Microsoft Word\]](#)

Protect Yourself from Mpox—Get Vaccinated!

Mpox continues to spread in the U.S. While the risk to most people remains low, the potential for new outbreaks is still a concern. Take steps to protect yourself from mpox, including getting vaccinated if you are at risk.

Vaccination is FREE and available across the state if you are at risk—regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity or immigration status. Vaccines have been found to be safe and effective in lowering your risk of mpox or serious illness if you get infected. Protection is highest after getting two vaccine doses given four weeks apart.

Contact your health care provider or visit HealthVermont.gov/mpox to learn more about mpox, vaccine eligibility, and locations.

Get the Facts About Mpox

Mpox is a viral illness that is mainly spread through close, personal (skin-to-skin) contact with someone who is infected. The most common symptom is a rash, which may look like pimples, blisters, or sores, or other more common rashes such as chicken pox, syphilis, or shingles. The rash can be extremely painful and leave scars.

Mpox can spread to anyone through close, personal contact with the rash, sores or scabs from a person sick with mpox infection. It is most often spread through sexual contact, but it is possible to get mpox through non-sexual contact with sores or bodily fluids, like when hugging, massaging, kissing or from prolonged face-to-face contact. Touching objects, fabrics and surfaces that have been used by someone infected with mpox and not disinfected is considered low risk.

While the risk to most people remains low, the potential for new outbreaks is still a concern. Take steps to protect yourself from mpox, including getting vaccinated if you are at risk. Talk to your health care provider if you have a rash or other symptoms of mpox—even if you have been vaccinated or had mpox before. If you do not have a health care provider, call 2-1-1 to be connected to care, or contact the nearest [federally qualified health center](#) or one of [Vermont's Free & Referral Clinics](#).

Learn more at HealthVermont.gov/mpox.

Social Media

Please share the following posts and images to your social media accounts, newsletter, blog, website, or Front Porch Forum. [\[Click to download all images in a zip file\]](#)

<p>Post 1</p>	<p>While most people’s risk of mpox is low, future outbreaks remain a concern. The good news is vaccination is safe, effective and free for individuals at risk of mpox exposures. Visit HealthVermont.gov/mpox for more on who’s at risk and how to get vaccinated.</p>	 <p>[download all images]</p>
<p>Post 2</p>	<p>Vaccination is a safe and effective tool against mpox—which continues to spread in the US. Two doses offer the highest level of protection against infection or serious illness. Visit HealthVermont.gov/mpox to learn more about who’s at risk and how to get vaccinated.</p>	 <p>[download all images]</p>
<p>Post 3</p>	<p>Mpx continues to spread in the US—but there’s a lot of people at higher risk of exposure who can do to prevent infection. Vaccines make it less likely you will get or spread mpox and are free throughout Vermont. Two doses gives the highest protection. Visit HealthVermont.gov/mpox to learn more about who’s at risk and how to get vaccinated.</p>	 <p>[download all images]</p>
<p>Post 4</p>	<p>Take steps to protect yourself from mpox, including getting vaccinated if you are at risk. Vaccines offer safe and effective protection against mpox infection or serious illness. Two doses give the highest level of protection. Visit HealthVermont.gov/mpox for more information on who’s at risk and where to get a free vaccine.</p>	 <p>[download all images]</p>
<p>Post 5</p>	<p>Some people are at higher risk of being exposed to mpox and should get vaccinated. This includes people in certain social networks and those with multiple sexual partners. The vaccine is free and two doses offer the highest level of protection. Visit HealthVermont.gov/mpox to learn more.</p>	 <p>[download all images]</p>