

Public Health Alert: Monkeypox

What is Monkeypox?

Monkeypox is a virus that spreads through prolonged skin to skin contact, sex, kissing, breathing at very close range, or sharing bedding and clothing. It appears as a distinctive rash or sores on the skin anywhere on the body, especially in the genital area. It often begins as flu-like symptoms.

There have been recent cases of monkeypox in a number of countries around the world – and in California. It can be serious, though most cases resolve on their own. Seeing a doctor right away is important.

San Francisco Department of Public Health is working with state and federal agencies to monitor for monkeypox, and to help control the spread of the virus.

Monkeypox is rare and currently a low threat to the general public. Having sex or close physical contact with multiple people can put you at higher risk for monkeypox if it is spreading in the community.

How to protect yourself:

- Consider wearing a well-fitted mask and covering exposed skin in dense, indoor crowds
- Don't share bedding, clothing, and food or drink with others
- Talk to close physical contacts about their general health like recent rashes or sores
- Stay aware if traveling to countries where there are outbreaks

If you have symptoms particularly a rash consistent with monkeypox, or if you have been in contact with someone who has been diagnosed with monkeypox:

- Cover the area of the rash with clean, dry, loose-fitting clothing
- Wear a well-fitted mask
- Avoid skin-to-skin, or close contact with others
- Contact a health care provider as soon as possible
- Assist public health officials to track others who may have been exposed

How to get help if you don't have a doctor:

If you do not have a provider, or have difficulty scheduling an appointment, you can be seen at [SF City Clinic](#) at 7th Street San Francisco (**628-217-6600**) or at [Strut](#) located 470 Castro Street (**415-581-1600**).

Screen regularly for sexually transmitted infections. Syphilis and herpes are much more common than monkeypox – they appear similar and should be treated too.

For more information, go to: sf.gov/monkeypox or cdc.gov/monkeypox

