

Aneeka Chaudhry
Interim AC Health
Director

Dr. Nick Moss
AC Health

Kimi Watkins-Tartt
ACPHD
Director

Dr. Eileen Dunne
ACPHD

Mpox Isolation Guidance

Last Updated: 11/24/2025

PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

The purpose of this document is to provide mpox isolation guidance. The following recommendations apply to persons with laboratory confirmed mpox, as well as persons with mpox symptoms while awaiting testing or lab results (i.e., suspected mpox).

If you suspect you may have mpox, isolate and contact your healthcare provider immediately.

MPOX OVERVIEW

Mpox is a rare disease caused by infection with the mpox virus (also called Monkeypox Virus). While this virus is related to smallpox, mpox illness is milder than smallpox but can still be serious.

HOW MPOX SPREADS

Any person—of any age, gender, or sexual orientation—who has direct physical contact with an infected person can get Mpox. **The mpox virus can spread by:**

- Direct skin-to-skin contact with the rash, sores, scabs, or body fluids of a person with infection
- Sexual and other intimate contact (e.g., hugging, cuddling, and kissing) with a person with infection
- Sharing unwashed bedding, towels, clothing, and utensils used by a person with infection
- Prolonged and close face-to-face contact with someone with infection
- Passing from a pregnant mother to the fetus

SYMPTOMS OF MPOX

The most common symptom of mpox is a **new, unexplained rash** that can look like pimples or blisters on the face, inside the mouth, and on other parts of the body, like the hands, feet, chest, genitals, and around the anus.

Early or additional symptoms of mpox may include **flu-like symptoms**, such as:

- Fever and/or Chills
- Headache
- Muscle and/or Body Aches
- Swollen Lymph Nodes
- Tiredness and/or Weakness

Note: If present, flu-like symptoms usually appear about 5 days before a rash.

ISOLATION INSTRUCTIONS

In accordance with the California Public Health Department (CDPH), **persons with confirmed or suspected mpox should isolate (stay at home in a private room)** unless it is necessary to see a healthcare provider.

What is Isolation?

Any person with suspected or confirmed mpox should isolate, immediately.

It is best to isolate in a single room with a dedicated bathroom

- Avoid close physical contact with other people and animals
- Keep rash and open sores completely covered with clothing, bandages, and/or gloves
- Wear a well-fitting mask when around other people
- Do not share beds, clothing, sheets, blankets, towels, washcloths, or eating utensils
- Wash hands or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer frequently

- Clean and disinfect all surfaces that you touch in shared spaces (especially the bathroom).

Note: It is okay to share spaces with others who are infected with mpox.

For more information on mpox prevention, see the following guidance:

- [CDC Mpoxy Isolation and Infection Control at Home](#)

How long should I isolate?

Persons with mpox can transmit infection from the start of mpox symptoms until all sores have fully healed and a fresh layer of skin has formed. This process can take 2-4 weeks. This is called the “infectious period”.

If you tested positive for mpox you should isolate at home until meeting all the following criteria:

- No fever (temperature of $\geq 100.4^{\circ}\text{F}$) for at least 48 hours without use of fever-reducing medication; **and**
- No respiratory symptoms (e.g., sore throat, nasal congestion, and cough) for at least 48 hours; **and**
- No new lesions have appeared for at least 48 hours; **and**
- Any rash and all sores have scabbed and healed with a fresh layer of skin, including sores in the mouth.

You can resume some activities outside the home that do not involve higher risk settings* or physical contact with other people if all the following criteria are met:

- Fever, respiratory symptoms, and no new lesions for at least 48 hours; **and**
- All rashes/sores can be covered **or** any rash or sore that cannot be covered-such as those on the face-are fully healed, i.e., scabs have fallen off and a fresh layer of skin has formed at the site.

RETURNING TO WORK

If you work in a **higher risk setting** you should wait to return to work until any rash and all sores have scabbed and fully healed with a fresh layer of skin.

*Higher Risk Settings include:

- Homeless shelters, migrant shelters, emergency shelters, and residential drug treatment facilities
- Healthcare settings
- State and local correctional facilities and detention centers
- Long-term care, adult and senior care facilities, and in-home services involving physical care
- Childcare and preschool settings that provide care for children from infancy through pre-school, assuming that there will be close physical contact for diapering, toileting, feeding, hygiene and general interaction
- K-12 schools and other settings (before/after school programs) that provide care for school-aged children younger than age 8 or older children whose care requires close physical contact, if job duties require direct physical contact with such children

NOTIFY YOUR CONTACTS

Make sure to tell anyone you had close physical contact with since your symptoms started that you have mpox infection if it is safe for you to do so. Include anyone with whom you had sex, cuddled, kissed, or shared a bed/room. People who have been exposed may be offered vaccination as soon as possible to prevent mpox illness or reduce symptoms.

Exposed contacts can go to [Vaccine | Monkeypox | Alameda County](#) to find out where they can get vaccinated. Also, we have mpox vaccine available to provide to contacts and if there is interest reach to us immediately at sexualhealth@acgov.org

ANSWER CALLS from PUBLIC HEALTH

Public health nurses and investigators are working to limit the spread of mpox. They will talk to you about your symptoms, ask about your contacts, and offer you resources to support your health and well-being.

ADDITIONAL IMPORTANT LINKS:

[Monkeypox | Alameda County | MPX](#) (Alameda County)

[Mpox](#) (California)

[CDC Mpox Website](#) (Federal)