

# 2022 Human Monkeypox Virus (hMPXV) Outbreak Partner Toolkit

Last updated: September 19, 2022. New information is in red.

Thank you for helping the Vermont Department of Health raise awareness of human monkeypox virus (hMPXV) by sharing fact-based, non-stigmatizing information with Vermonters. To reduce stigma and discrimination, the Vermont Department of Health will refer to this virus as hMPXV while the World Health Organization works to officially rename the virus.

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 the evolving hMPXV outbreak 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/hMPXV](https://healthvermont.gov/hMPXV).

## 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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## Summary Talking Points (CDC)

### About hMPXV

- Monkeypox is a disease caused by the human version of the monkeypox virus (hMPXV) not commonly found in the U.S. hMPXV is not a new virus.
- Recently, there have been cases of people infected with hMPXV in the U.S. and other countries, including Canada.
- The risk of infection in the U.S. and in Vermont remains LOW.
- Unlike the virus that causes COVID-19 that mainly spreads through the air, hMPXV is mainly spread through prolonged close contact.
- Most people get better in two to four weeks and without medical treatment.
- The most common symptom of illness from hMPXV 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 only with no other symptoms.
- Symptoms can be very painful, and people might have permanent scarring from the rash.

### How It Spreads

- hMPXV can spread to anyone through close and often skin-to-skin contact with someone who has an hMPXV infection.
  - Close contact includes direct contact with a rash, sores or scabs from someone who has a hMPXV infection.
  - It is not considered a sexually transmitted infection, but it can spread during sexual encounters if there is direct contact with sores or bodily fluids.
  - People can also become infected through direct contact with materials that have touched body fluids or sores, such as clothing or linens.
  - hMPXV 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 hMPXV infection).
- hMPXV 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 hMPXV should avoid contact with animals while they are contagious.
- Symptoms can be very mild. The virus can be spread even by people who might not realize they are infected.

## Treatment and Vaccination

- Vaccines are available to prevent the spread of hMPXV. Get up to date information about vaccine availability and eligibility in Vermont at [www.healthvermont.gov/hMPXV](http://www.healthvermont.gov/hMPXV). Vaccination is free and available regardless of immigration status.
- Treatment is also available, however most people fully recover without it.

## Current Outbreak

- Anyone—regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation— who has been in close contact with someone who is ill from hMPXV infection is at risk. This includes anyone living in a house and sharing bedding, towels or unwashed clothing with someone with the disease.
- Gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men make up a high number of early cases and might be at higher risk of coming into contact with the virus.
- Do not stigmatize those who might come into contact with the virus. [Learn more about reducing stigma in communication and community engagement.](#)

## What Vermonters Can Do

- Anyone with a rash that looks like hMPXV infection should talk to their health care provider, even if they don't think they had contact with someone who was ill with hMPXV.
- If you feel sick or have any new or unexplained rashes or sores, stay home, do not attend any gatherings, and avoid close contact with people or animals
- 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. However, be mindful of activities that might spread hMPXV, like prolonged face-to-face 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 sexual contact occurs.
- Lower your risk with sexual partners: talk to your partner about any recent illness and be aware of new or unexplained sores or rashes on your or your partner's body. If there are any new or unexplained sores or rashes, or either of you have areas of the body or skin that feel sore or tight, do not have sex and see a health care provider.

## Samples and Templates

### Social Media

[Use URL link preview or find more images at [cdc.gov/monkeypox/](https://www.cdc.gov/monkeypox/).]

| Topic           | Facebook/Instagram  | Twitter   |
|-----------------|---|---|
| How it spreads  | Get the facts about hMPXV (human monkeypox virus)! While it's not considered a sexually transmitted disease, it can spread during close and often skin-to-skin contact. This includes having sex, kissing, hugging, massaging and talking closely. Get more facts at <a href="https://www.healthvermont.gov/hMPXV">www.healthvermont.gov/hMPXV</a> .  | Get the facts about #hMPXV (human monkeypox virus)! While it's not considered a sexually transmitted disease, it can spread during close and often skin-to-skin contact. This includes having sex, kissing, hugging, massaging, and talking closely. Learn more at <a href="https://healthvermont.gov/hMPXV">healthvermont.gov/hMPXV</a> .                  |
| How it spreads  | Get the facts about hMPXV (human monkeypox virus)! It can spread from person-to-person in different ways: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Direct contact with infectious rash, scabs, or body fluids</li> <li>- During intimate physical contact like kissing, cuddling or sex</li> <li>- Touching items, like clothing or linens, that previously touched the infectious rash or body fluids</li> </ul> Learn more at <a href="https://www.healthvermont.gov/hMPXV">www.healthvermont.gov/hMPXV</a> . | How #hMPXV (human monkeypox virus) can spread from person-to-person: Direct contact with infectious rash, scabs, or body fluids. During intimate physical contact. And touching items, like clothing, that previously touched infectious rash or fluids. Learn more <a href="https://healthvermont.gov/hMPXV">healthvermont.gov/hMPXV</a> .                 |
| COVID and hMPXV | How serious is hMPXV (human monkeypox virus)? Is it like COVID-19? hMPXV is different than the virus that causes covid-19. hMPXV is primarily spread through close contact, not through the air. Know what steps to take to prevent it from spreading further. Learn more at <a href="https://www.healthvermont.gov/hMPXV">www.healthvermont.gov/hMPXV</a> .  | 1/2 #hMPXV (human monkeypox virus) is different than the virus that causes covid-19. hMPXV is primarily spread through close contact, not through the air.<br><br>2/2 Like any contagious disease, we DO need to take steps to prevent #hMPXV from spreading further. Learn more at <a href="https://healthvermont.gov/hMPXV">healthvermont.gov/hMPXV</a> . |
| If you're sick  | We all can take steps to prevent hMPXV (human monkeypox virus) from spreading. If you are feeling sick, or if you have any unexplained rashes or sores, avoid contact with other people and animals and get checked out by a health care provider. Learn more at <a href="https://www.healthvermont.gov/hMPXV">www.healthvermont.gov/hMPXV</a> .  | We all need to take steps to prevent #hMPXV (human monkeypox virus) from spreading. If you are feeling sick, or if you have any unexplained rashes or sores, avoid contact with other people and animals and get checked out by a health care provider. Learn more at <a href="https://healthvermont.gov/hMPXV">healthvermont.gov/hMPXV</a> .               |
| Know the risks  | Know the risks of getting hMPXV (human monkeypox virus) before heading out to have some fun! Lower risk events = fully clothed and unlikely to share skin-to-skin contact. Higher risk events = minimal clothing and likely to have close or sexual contact. Always stay home if you are feeling sick and call your doctor if you have any rashes or sores. Learn more at <a href="https://www.healthvermont.gov/hMPXV">www.healthvermont.gov/hMPXV</a> .   | Know the risks of getting hMPXV! Lower risk events = fully clothed and skin-to-skin contact is unlikely. Higher risk events = minimal clothing and intimate sexual contact is likely. Stay home if you're feeling sick or have rashes or sores. Learn more at <a href="https://healthvermont.gov/hMPXV">healthvermont.gov/hMPXV</a> .                       |
| Vaccines        | Free vaccines are available to prevent the spread of hMPXV. Visit <a href="https://www.healthvermont.gov/hMPXV">www.healthvermont.gov/hMPXV</a> to find out if you are eligible.  | Free vaccines are available to prevent the spread of hMPXV. Visit <a href="https://www.healthvermont.gov/hMPXV">www.healthvermont.gov/hMPXV</a> to find out if you are eligible.  |

## Email/Letter

[Please copy and paste into an email or your organization's letterhead.]

Dear [Community],

We are monitoring the current human monkeypox virus (hMPXV) situation and are working with the Vermont Department of Health to help stop the further spread of the virus. While the risk to Vermonters remains low, we want to keep you updated and make sure you know the facts, the risks, and how to stay healthy. Unlike COVID-19 that mainly spreads through the air, hMPXV is mainly spread through prolonged close contact.

Monkeypox is a disease caused by a virus not commonly seen in the United States. However, hMPXV cases recently have been found in the United States and several other countries, including Canada. hMPXV can make you sick, with symptoms like a rash, which may look like pimples, blisters, or sores, often with an earlier flu-like illness.

hMPXV can spread to anyone through close and often skin-to-skin contact including:

- Direct contact with rash, sores or scabs from a person sick with hMPXV infection.
- Contact with objects, fabrics (clothing, bedding, or towels), and surfaces that have been used by someone sick with hMPXV infection.
- Contact with respiratory secretions, through kissing and other face-to-face contact. This contact can happen in certain social and sexual situations including:
  - Hugging, massage and kissing.
  - Oral, anal and vaginal sex or touching the genitals (penis, testicles, labia, and vagina) or anus (butt) of a person with hMPXV infection.
  - Touching fabrics and objects that were used by a person ill from hMPXV and that have not been disinfected, such as bedding, towels, fetish gear and sex toys.

If you feel sick or have a new or unexplained rash or sores, avoid contact with other people and animals, stay home and 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](#).

Free vaccines are available to prevent the spread of hMPXV. Visit [www.healthvermont.gov/hMPXV](http://www.healthvermont.gov/hMPXV) to find out if you are eligible.

Get more information at [cdc.gov/monkeypox](https://www.cdc.gov/monkeypox) and [healthvermont.gov/hMPXV](http://healthvermont.gov/hMPXV).

[Related materials: [CDC web page: "Safer Sex, Social Gatherings, and Monkeypox"](#), [CDC Fact Sheet: "Monkeypox and Safer Sex"](#)]

## Newsletter Post

### Get the Facts about Human Monkeypox Virus (hMPXV)

Monkeypox is a disease not commonly found in the U.S. until recently. The risk of infection remains low, and it does not spread easily without close and often skin-to-skin contact. There's a lot we still need to learn about the current outbreak, but we want to make sure you have the facts.

hMPXV can make you sick. The most common symptom is a rash which can look like pimples, blisters, or sores, often with an earlier flu-like illness. While it's not considered a sexually transmitted disease, hMPXV can spread to others during prolonged close and personal contact. This includes people having sex, kissing, hugging, massaging and talking closely.

If you feel sick or have a new or unexplained rash or sores, avoid contact with other people and animals, stay home and 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](#).

Free vaccines are available to prevent the spread of hMPXV. Visit [www.healthvermont.gov/hMPXV](http://www.healthvermont.gov/hMPXV) to find out if you are eligible.

Learn more at [cdc.gov/monkeypox](https://cdc.gov/monkeypox) and [healthvermont.gov/hMPXV](http://healthvermont.gov/hMPXV).

[Related materials: [CDC web page: "Safer Sex, Social Gatherings, and Monkeypox"](#), [CDC Fact Sheet: "Monkeypox and Safer Sex"](#)]