

Mpox: Information for cases

What are the symptoms of mpox?

Symptoms can begin 7-14 days after exposure but can start earlier or take as long as 21 days to develop.

Some people get early symptoms such as:

- Fever
- Headache
- Muscle aches and back ache
- Chills
- Exhaustion
- Swollen lymph nodes.

Usual symptoms include:

- rashes, pimple-like lesions or sores, particularly in areas that are hard to see such as the genitals, anus or buttocks
- ulcers, lesions or sore in the mouth.

People with mpox are infectious from when they first get symptoms until all the lesions have crusted, the scabs have fallen off and a fresh layer of skin has formed underneath.

Most people with mpox get better within a few weeks without requiring any specific treatment.

How does mpox spread?

Mpox can spread through:

- direct skin to skin contact with rashes, blisters or sores on the skin
- semen and other bodily fluids
- contaminated objects, such as bedding or clothes
- breathing in droplets breathed out by someone who has mpox, but this is rare.

What happens if I have mpox?

Your local public health unit (PHU) will interview you to help stop the spread of mpox. With your

permission, the PHU will follow-up with anyone you may have been in contact with while infectious. They will try to find out where you may have caught the infection.

You may be asked stay at home and self-isolate to minimise the risk of spreading mpox to other people.

Your doctor or a sexual health clinician will manage your health while you have mpox. Treatment may include pain relief, wound care, and rarely medication to treat mpox or secondary bacterial infections. The doctor will let you know who to call if you need help on weekends or out-of-hours.

If your symptoms get worse or in an emergency, call Triple Zero (000) right away and say you have mpox. Wear a surgical mask if you will be around other people. This includes while in an ambulance, hospital or GP clinic.

How do I self-isolate?

Self-isolation helps reduce the spread of mpox by staying away from others.

If you have mpox and need to self-isolate, you should:

- stay at home unless for essential activities. If you need to leave your home, wear a surgical mask and cover any exposed lesions or sores
- work from home where possible. If you can't work from home, discuss this with your local PHU
- not have any visitors to your home
- maintain at least a 1.5m distance from others, particularly those at higher risk of infection (infants, older people, immunocompromised people, and people who are pregnant)
- sleep in a separate room from others where possible
- not have sex with others
- wash your hands with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser regularly
- clean places you often touch such as door handles and light switches regularly with disinfectant
- not share clothing, bedding, towels, unwashed dishes and cutlery. If others must touch these items, they should wear gloves and a surgical mask
- avoid contact with pet and other animals, especially mammals
- ask people caring for you to wear a surgical mask, gloves, disposable fluid-resistant gown and eye protection. Ask your doctor for advice on how you can get these items if you're having issues.

When can I stop self-isolating?

The PHU or your doctor will tell you when you are no longer infectious. After this, you can do your normal activities but you should:

- use condoms for any sexual activity for 12 weeks after you have recovered
- not donate blood, cells, tissue, breast milk, semen or organs for 12 weeks

- thoroughly clean and disinfect your home. For advice on how to clean and disinfect your home, visit the [Clinical Excellence Commission website](#).

What support is there while I am self-isolating?

It is important to take care of your mind as well as your body. Stay in touch with family and friends virtually and reach out for help or support if you ever need it.

- [ACON's support services](#) – Offers a range of free and affordable counselling services for LGBTQ+ adults in NSW – (02) 9206 2000
- [QLife](#) – A national and anonymous phone and online counselling service staffed by LGBTQ+ community members – 1800 184 527
- [NSW Mental Health Line](#) – 1800 011 511
- [Beyond Blue](#)– 1800 512 348
- [Lifeline](#) – 13 11 14

Should I get a mpox vaccination if I have had mpox?

If you have had mpox before, you do not need to get a mpox vaccine at this time. However, you should still protect yourself so you do not get mpox again. Learn more about how to stay safe in the [mpox fact sheet](#).

Further information

Visit the [NSW Health mpox information hub](#) for further information. You can also call your local PHU on 1300 066 055.

For free help in your language, call the Translating and Interpreting Service on 13 14 50.