

# Mpox

## What is Mpox?

Mpox (previously known as monkeypox) is a rare infection most commonly found in parts of west, central and east Africa.

## Mpox in the UK

There have been a small number of cases of mpox in the UK since 2022. These have all been a type of mpox that may be milder (called clade 2 mpox) and were mostly seen among gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men. There have not been any cases of the type of mpox that may be more serious (Called clade 1 mpox) in the UK. NHS have reported that although more people have been diagnosed with Mpox recently, only a small number of people in the UK have had the infection and the overall risk remains low.

People are unlikely to catch mpox if:

- They have not been in close contact (such as touching their skin or sharing towels, clothes or bedding) with someone who has Mpox or has Mpox symptoms.
- They have not recently travelled to west or central Africa.

Anyone can catch Mpox although most cases in the UK have been in men who are gay, bisexual or have sex with other men, so it's particularly important for people in these groups to be aware of the symptoms.

## Mpox symptoms

The first symptoms (usually between 5 and 21 days of being infected) of Mpox include:

- a high temperature (fever)
- a headache
- muscle aches
- backache
- swollen glands
- shivering (chills)
- exhaustion
- joint pain

A rash usually appears 1 to 5 days after the first symptoms. It can be on any part of the body, including the palms of the hands, soles of the feet, mouth, genitals and anus. There may also be anal pain or bleeding from ones bottom.

The rash starts as raised spots, which turn into sores (ulcers) or small blisters filled with fluid. The blisters eventually form scabs which later fall off.

The symptoms usually clear up in a few weeks. Whilst a person has symptoms, they can pass Mpox on to other people.

## Contact a GP or NHS 111

- If you have a rash with blisters or sores (ulcers) and you've been to central or east Africa in the past 3 weeks
- If you have a rash with blisters or sores (ulcers) and you've been in close contact (including sexual contact) with someone who has symptoms of mpox and they've been to central or east Africa in the past 3 weeks
- If you have any other symptoms of mpox and you've been to central or east Africa in the past 3 weeks and had close contact with someone who had symptoms of Mpox

Stay at home and avoid close contact with other people, including sharing towels or bedding, until you've been told what to do. Tell the person you speak to about your recent travel history.

## Vaccinations

The NHS is offering the smallpox (MVA) vaccine to people who are most likely to be exposed to Mpox.

People who are most likely to be exposed include:

- Healthcare workers caring for patients with confirmed or suspected Mpox
- Men who are gay, bisexual or have sex with other men, and who have multiple partners, participate in group sex or attend sex-on-premises venues (staff at these venues are also eligible)
- People who've been in close contact with someone who has mpox – ideally, they should have 1 dose of the vaccine within 4 days of contact, but it can be given up to 14 days after
- Healthcare workers will usually be offered 2 doses of the vaccine.
- Men who are gay, bisexual or have sex with other men will be offered 2 doses of the vaccine. The 2nd dose will be offered from 2 to 3 months after the 1st dose.

Your local NHS services will contact you when you can get your 2nd dose.

## Travel advice

- [Check the risks of a country you're travelling to on the TravelHealthPro website](#)
- [Foreign Commonwealth & Development Office \(FCDO\) Travel advice Current travel guidance for all UK residents travelling to any country](#)

## Further Information

- [Mpox - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)
- [Mpox: background information - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Mpox: guidance on when to suspect a case of mpox - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Health protection in children and young people settings, including education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- [De-isolation and discharge of mpox-infected patients - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

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