

# Understanding Monkeypox

Monkeypox is making headlines and alerting health experts as cases continue to rise in the UK. So, what is monkeypox?

Monkeypox is a viral disease that can be caught from infected animals and then passed from person to person. It's usually found in Central and West Africa. As monkeypox cases rise in Europe and around the world, health authorities are expressing concern about the unusual uptick.

## Signs and Symptoms

The incubation period from infection to symptoms of monkeypox is usually five to 21 days, and most people recover within several weeks.

Monkeypox symptoms are similar but milder than those of smallpox. The illness begins with the following symptoms:



Fever



Headache



Muscle aches



Backache



Swollen lymph nodes



Chills



Exhaustion

One to five days after a fever begins, a rash may develop, starting on the face and then spreading to other body parts.

## Treatment

There is no proven, safe treatment for monkeypox virus infection. However, most people recover within a few weeks.

## Prevention

Transmission of monkeypox occurs when a person comes into contact with the virus from an animal, human or materials contaminated with the virus. The virus enters the body through broken skin, the respiratory tract, eyes, nose or mouth.

Consider the following measures to prevent infection with monkeypox:



Avoid contact with (live or dead) animals that could be infected with the virus.



Avoid contact with any materials, such as bedclothes, that have been in contact with a sick animal.



Isolate infected patients from others who could be at risk for infection.



Practise good hand hygiene—washing your hands with soap and water or using an alcohol-based hand sanitiser—after contact with infected animals or humans.



Use personal protective equipment when caring for patients.

Visit the [NHS website](#) for more information about monkeypox.  
If you have health concerns, contact your GP.