Monkeypox and Sexual Health:
What you Should Know

What is monkeypox, and what should I know?

- Anyone can get monkeypox. However, based on the current outbreak, certain populations are being affected by monkeypox more than others, including men who have sex with men (MSM).
- Monkeypox is a rare, viral infection that does not usually cause serious illness. However, it can result in hospitalization or death.
- Based on previous outbreaks of monkeypox around the world, some groups may also be at heightened risk for severe outcomes if they contract monkeypox.
- This includes people with weakened immune systems, older New Yorkers, young children under 8 years of age, and pregnant people.
- Everyone should stay informed about monkeypox. This means understanding the symptoms, how it spreads, and what to do if you are exposed.

What are the symptoms of monkeypox?

Symptoms of monkeypox include:

- Rashes, bumps, or blisters that may appear on or around the genitals or in other areas such as your hands, feet, chest, or face.
- Flu-like symptoms, such as fever, headache, muscle aches, chills, and fatigue. These symptoms may occur before or after the rash appears, or not at all.

How does monkeypox spread?

- Close, direct contact with monkeypox sores or rashes on an individual who has monkeypox.
- Respiratory droplets or oral fluids from someone with monkeypox, especially if you are around them for a long time.
- Contact with objects or fabrics (such as clothing, bedding, towels) that have been used by someone with monkeypox.

What should I do if I was exposed or have symptoms of monkeypox?

If you have symptoms like rashes or lesions, call your health care provider, especially if you've had contact with someone who has a similar rash, or has a suspected/confirmed case of monkeypox.

How can I protect myself against monkeypox?

- Ask your sexual partners whether they have a rash or other symptoms consistent with monkeypox.
- Avoid skin-to-skin contact with someone who has a rash or other monkeypox-related symptoms.
- If you are exposed or have symptoms, call your health care provider.
- Get vaccinated.

For more information:

- Follow trusted sources of health information, including:
  — NYSDOH Monkeypox https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/zoonoses/monkeypox/
  — CDC Monkeypox | Poxvirus https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/vis/vis-statements/smallpox-monkeypox.html
  — Your local county health department https://www.health.ny.gov/contact/contact_information/
- For monkeypox text alerts from New York State, text "MONKEYPOX" to 8133 or "MONKEYPOXESP" for texts in Spanish.
- By providing a zip code, New Yorkers can also get location-based messages, which may include information on vaccines and care in your area.

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