

***What are the University of Pittsburgh and Student Health Services doing in response to monkeypox?***

The University of Pittsburgh and Student Health Services are working in collaboration with the Allegheny County Health Department (ACHD) to monitor monkeypox cases locally and the potential impact on the region.

***What is Monkeypox?***

Monkeypox is a contagious disease caused by the same family of viruses that causes smallpox, orthopoxvirus. Monkeypox symptoms are similar to smallpox, but milder and rarely fatal.

***How is Monkeypox transmitted?***

Human-to-human transmission occurs primarily through direct contact with infected lesions or fluids or contact with contaminated materials like clothing or bedding. It also can be spread by respiratory droplets during prolonged face-to-face contact. For further information, please see <https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/clinicians/monitoring.html>.

***What can I do to protect myself from getting monkeypox?***

The most effective means of prevention against contracting monkeypox are:

- Avoid contact with people who may be infected
- Avoid contact with bedding and other materials contaminated with the virus
- Avoid skin-to-skin contact with someone with a rash
- Use personal protective equipment (PPE) when caring for infected persons
- Practice safe sex
- Wash your hands with soap and water

For information on safer sex and social gatherings, please see <https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/sexualhealth/index.html>

***What is the incubation period?***

Monkeypox has an average incubation period of 6 to 13 days where the person does not have symptoms. ***A person is not contagious during this period.***

***I think I have monkeypox, can I get tested at Student Health Services?***

Yes, Student Health Services is providing testing for monkeypox.

### ***How do I get a monkeypox vaccine?***

The monkeypox vaccine is available for individuals who meet a specific close contact criteria. The vaccine can prevent disease if given within four days of exposure to the virus.

The ACHD Immunization Clinic offers the JYNNEOS vaccine to those who meet criteria. Eligibility is determined on a case-by-case basis through Health Department case investigators.

The ACHD is developing a plan with the CDC and the Pennsylvania Department of Health for expanding vaccine eligibility and clinic sites, as it obtains more vaccines from the federal government.

### ***What is the treatment for monkeypox?***

Most patients have mild illness and require no treatment.

Currently, there is no treatment specifically approved for monkeypox virus infections.

TPOXX® (tecovirimat) is still listed as an investigational drug. So, it is being controlled and distributed directly from the CDC to health departments. ACHD has a limited supply. It is currently reserved for patients with severe symptoms. Patients may be referred to the ACHD for consideration of treatment.

### ***Why did the White House declare monkeypox a public health emergency?***

This declaration facilitates access to emergency funds, allows health agencies to collect data about cases and vaccinations, accelerates vaccine distribution, and makes it easier to prescribe treatment.