



Home Isolation Instructions for People with Monkeypox (MPX)

If you test positive for monkeypox (MPX) you are required to:

- Isolate - stay home and avoid contact with others
- Provide us with contact information for your close contacts so we can notify them confidentially and provide them instructions for self-monitoring
- Follow the steps below

ISOLATE

You must **stay home and separate yourself from others** until your home isolation ends.

- Stay away from household members.
- Do not go to work, school, or public areas.
- If you must leave your home to seek medical care, do not use public transportation. Use a personal vehicle if possible. If you cannot drive yourself, be sure to keep as much distance as possible between you and the driver, leave the windows down, and wear a face covering or mask, if possible.
- Arrange for food and other necessities to be left at your door if you do not have anyone at home to help you. If you need to meet someone at your door, wear a face covering or mask.

How long do I need to isolate?

If you were diagnosed with MPX by a health care provider and you have lesions, you should isolate until all lesions have crusted, the crusts have separated, and a fresh layer of healthy skin has formed and any other symptoms have been resolved for at least 48 hours.

Home isolation may be modified to essential activities outside of the home that do not involve high-risk settings* or physical contact with other people without medical clearance once **ALL** of the following criteria are met:

1. Any fever or respiratory symptoms have been resolved for at least 48 hours; **AND**
2. No new lesions have appeared for at least 48 hours; **AND**
3. Any lesions that cannot be covered, such as those on the face, head, neck, or hands, are fully healed (scabs have fallen off and a fresh layer of skin has formed at the lesion sites).

Once all of the above criteria are met, you may resume limited activities outside the home using the precautions below:

- Cover any lesions that have not healed yet with clothing or bandages
- Wear a well-fitting [respirator](#) or mask at all times when in contact with other people
- Wash hands frequently with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer and avoid direct contact with lesions
- Do not share towels or other personal objects with others
- Avoid crowded settings such as bars, clubs, parties, saunas, and bath houses
- Avoid direct skin-to-skin contact or intimate physical contact with others including kissing, cuddling, and sexual contact

RETURN TO WORK

You may return to work in non-high-risk workplaces* when all of the following conditions are met:

1. Any fever or respiratory symptoms have been resolved for at least 48 hours; **AND**
2. No new lesions have appeared for at least 48 hours; **AND**
3. Any lesions that cannot be covered, such as those on the face, head, neck, or hands, are fully healed (scabs have fallen off and a fresh layer of skin has formed at the lesion sites); **AND**
4. Employment does not involve direct physical care or contact with others (e.g., massage therapy, estheticians, sex work, etc.); **AND**
5. Employment is not in a high-risk setting*; **AND**
6. Virtual work is not possible.

If these conditions for return to work are not met, you should not return to work until your skin lesions are fully healed and other symptoms have been resolved for at least 48 hours.

Virtual work options and paid leave should be explored. For more information about paid leave options, please see the [California Employment Development Department site](#) and the [Leave Benefits | U.S. Department of Labor \(dol.gov\)](#).

If you are employed or actively looking for work and are unable to do your regular or customary work for at least eight days, you may qualify for financial support from [California's State Disability Insurance \(SDI\) program](#). Note that you must be under the care and treatment of a licensed physician/practitioner who must complete the medical certification portion of the disability claim.

***High-risk settings include:**

- Homeless shelters, migrant shelters, emergency shelters, and residential drug treatment facilities
- Healthcare settings
- State and local correctional facilities and detention centers
- Long-term care, adult and senior care facilities, and in-home services involving physical care
- Childcare and preschool settings that provide care for children from infancy through pre-school, assuming that there will be close physical contact for diapering, toileting, feeding, hygiene and general interaction
- K-12 schools and other settings (before/after school programs) that provide care for school-aged children younger than age 8 or older children whose care requires close physical contact, if job duties require direct physical contact with such children

If you work in a high-risk setting, you should not return to the workplace until all skin lesions have healed (scabs have fallen off and a fresh layer of skin has formed at the lesion sites) and any other symptoms have been resolved for at least 48 hours. Before returning to a high-risk setting*, talk to your healthcare provider or contact your Sacramento County Public Health nurse for guidance.

HOME CARE

Here are steps that you should take while isolating at home:

- If you have extensive lesions that cannot be easily covered (excluding facial lesions), draining/weeping lesions, or respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, sore throat, runny nose), you should be isolated in a room or area separate from other family members and pets when possible.
- Do not leave the home except as required for follow-up medical care.
- Unexposed persons who do not have an essential need to be in the home should not visit.
- Limit your contact with household members who are not ill.
- Avoid contact with animals, including pets. Other household members should care for pets when possible.
- Wear a disposable mask (surgical, KF94, KN95, or N95) if around household members, especially if you have respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath, sore throat). If this is not feasible (e.g., a child with MPX), other household members should consider wearing a surgical mask when in the presence of the person with MPX.
- Wear disposable gloves for direct contact with lesions and dispose of after use.
- Skin lesions should be covered to the best extent possible (e.g., long sleeves, long pants) to minimize risk of contact with others.
- Avoid using contact lenses to prevent infection of the eyes.
- Avoid shaving lesion-covered areas of the body as this can lead to spread of the virus.
- Contain and dispose of contaminated waste (such as dressings and bandages) in a sealed plastic bag.

Seeking Medical Care

Seek prompt medical care if your symptoms get worse, especially if you are 65 years and older, pregnant, or have health problems such as a chronic diseases or a weak immune system.

If it's not urgent, call ahead before visiting your doctor, you may be able to get advice by phone. If you do visit a health care facility, put a face covering or mask on before you enter to protect others.

PROTECTING OTHERS

Follow the additional steps below to help prevent the disease from spreading to people in your home and your community.

Separate yourself from other people in your home

- Stay in a specific room and away from other people in your home as much as possible. It is particularly important to stay away from people who are at higher risk of serious illness. Consider alternate living arrangements for them if at all possible.
- Use a separate bathroom. If this is not possible, clean the bathroom after use (see below).
- Open windows or use a fan or an air conditioner in shared spaces in the home, if possible, to ensure good airflow.
- Do not allow visitors.
- Do not make or serve food to others.
- Avoid caring for children, if possible, or wear a face covering or mask and cover all lesions if you have to provide care for children.
- Do not handle pets or other animals.

Take a break from close contact, including sexual activity

- Avoid kissing, hugging, cuddling, sleeping in the same bed, or having sex or other close skin-to-skin contact with other people.
- Evidence on MPX transmission via genital excretions is lacking. As a precautionary approach, it is recommended that you refrain from sexual activity or use condoms during sexual activity for 12 weeks after healing while scientists and public health officials seek to understand whether MPX virus remains in semen and/or can be spread through sexual activity, even after skin lesions are healed.

Cover unhealed skin lesions if living with other people

- Cover lesions with clothing, or a piece of gauze held in place with first aid tape or a semi-permeable bandage (one that allows air to flow through, but not fluids), e.g., Tegaderm™ with a gauze pad or similar.
- Wear gloves to cover lesions on hands.
- Prevent lesions from touching other people or items that may be used by others (bedding, towels, clothing, furniture, door handles, sex toys, cutlery, etc.).
- Follow healthcare provider recommendations on the care of lesions.
- Seek medical attention if there are any signs of a secondary bacterial infection, including fever, pus, or increasing warmth, redness, and swelling in the skin surrounding the lesions.
- Changing bandages should be performed by the person with MPX while wearing disposable gloves. Wash hands immediately following glove removal and disposal.
- If assistance is needed with cleaning or caring for skin lesions, including bandaging, the person helping should wear, at a minimum, disposable gloves, long sleeves, and a well-fitting mask or respirator.
- Any clothing that contacts the lesions during bandage changes should be immediately laundered.

- Contain and dispose of contaminated waste (e.g., bandages, gloves) following [CDC guidance](#).

Wear a mask when you are around others

- You should wear a disposable mask (surgical, KF94, KN95, or N95) when you are around other people (e.g. shared room or vehicle) or pets and before you enter a hospital or doctor's office.
- If you are not able to wear a mask (for example, because it causes trouble breathing), then people who live with you should not be in the same room with you. If they must enter your room, they should wear a disposable mask. After leaving your room, they should immediately clean their hands, remove and dispose of their mask, and clean their hands again.
- Infants and children under 2 should not wear face coverings or masks.

Cover your coughs and sneezes

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw used tissues in a lined trash can. Immediately wash your hands.

Avoid sharing personal household items

Do not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, or bedding with other people or pets in your home. Wash them thoroughly with soap and water after use.

Clean your hands often

Wash your hands often and thoroughly, especially after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; going to the bathroom; and before eating or preparing food. Use soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol, covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry. Use soap and water if your hands are visibly dirty.

Laundry

Laundry (e.g., bedding, towels, clothing) may be washed in a standard washing machine with warm water and detergent; bleach may be added but is not necessary.

- Care should be used when handling soiled laundry to avoid direct contact with contaminated material.
- Soiled laundry should not be shaken or otherwise handled in a manner that may disperse infectious particles.
- Do not place clean laundry in the same storage container (e.g. laundry basket or bag) used to store soiled laundry.

Disinfection

Contaminated surfaces should be cleaned and disinfected. Standard household cleaning/disinfectants may be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Follow CDC's [general guidance on cleaning and disinfecting non-healthcare settings](#) such as homes and cars where you spent significant time during your infectious period.

Talk to Public Health

Help slow the spread of MPX by maintaining regular communication with your Sacramento County Public Health nurse and providing them with requested information. Providing us with the names and contact information of your close contacts allows us to confidentially notify them that they may have been exposed and provide them with instructions for self-monitoring and information on potential vaccination.