

## MPOX FACT SHEET

The health department is updating webpages and materials with the term “mpox” to reduce stigma and other issues associated with prior terminology. This change is aligned with [the recent World Health Organization decision](#) and supported by MDHHS and the CDC. No other changes have been made to this fact sheet. 1-2023

### WHAT IS MPOX?

Mpox is a rare but potentially serious disease. Mpox is in the same family of viruses as smallpox, but mpox typically results in a milder infection. It is rarely fatal. It is not related to chickenpox.

### HOW IS MPOX SPREAD?

Mpox can spread person to person through close, personal, often skin-to-skin contact, including:

- Direct contact with mpox rash, sores, or scabs
- Contact with objects, fabrics (clothing, bedding, or towels), and surfaces that have been used by someone with mpox
- Through respiratory droplets, secretions, or oral fluids from a person with mpox
- This contact can happen during intimate sexual contact, including:
  - Oral, anal, and vaginal sex or touching the genitals or anus of a person with mpox
  - Hugging, massage, or kissing and talking closely
  - Touching fabrics and objects during sex that were used by a person with mpox, such as bedding, towels, and sex toys

### WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF MPOX?

Symptoms can include:

- Fever
- Chills
- Swollen lymph nodes
- Exhaustion
- Muscle aches
- Backache
- Headache
- Respiratory symptoms, such as sore throat, nasal stuffiness or cough
- A rash that can look like pimples or blisters that appear on the face, mouth, and on other parts of the body, like the hands, feet, chest, genitals, or anus.



Although rarely fatal, symptoms can be extremely painful, and people might have permanent scarring resulting from the rash.

## HOW LONG DO MPOX SYMPTOMS LAST?

Mpox symptoms usually start within 3 weeks of exposure to the virus. If someone has flu-like symptoms, they will usually develop a rash 1-4 days later.

Mpox can be spread from the time symptoms start until the rash has healed, all scabs have fallen off, and a fresh layer of skin has formed. The illness typically lasts 2-4 weeks.

## IS THERE A TREATMENT FOR MPOX?

There is no specific treatment for mpox, although antivirals for smallpox may be used in those with high risk for severe illness.

## HOW CAN MPOX BE PREVENTED?

1. Avoid close, skin-to-skin contact with people who have a rash that looks like mpox.
  - Do not touch the rash or scabs of person with mpox.
  - Do not kiss, hug, cuddle or have sex with someone with mpox.
2. Avoid contact with objects and materials that a person with mpox has used.
  - Do not share eating utensils or cups with a person with mpox.
  - Do not handle or touch the bedding, towels, or clothing of a person with mpox.
3. Wash your hands often
  - Wash your hands often with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer, especially before eating or touching your face and after you use the bathroom.
4. Isolate infected people from others who could be at risk for infection.

## IF YOU HAVE A NEW, UNEXPLAINED RASH OR OTHER MPOX SYMPTOMS:

- See your healthcare provider right away
- Avoid sex or being intimate with anyone until you have been checked out

## IF YOU ARE DIAGNOSED WITH MPOX:

- Follow the treatment and prevention recommendations of your healthcare provider.
- Avoid sex or being intimate with anyone until all your sores have healed and you have a fresh layer of skin formed.

## MORE INFORMATION:

CDC: [www.cdc.gov/mpox](http://www.cdc.gov/mpox)

Michigan Department of Health and Human Services: [www.michigan.gov/mpv](http://www.michigan.gov/mpv)

Michigan's Vaccine Information: <https://tinyurl.com/MPVvaccine>

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