



Monkeypox vs. COVID-19



Although the sudden emergence of monkeypox can be alarming after over two years of living through the COVID-19 pandemic, monkeypox is not a new virus and does not spread in the same way as COVID-19.

While it's good to stay alert about emerging public health outbreaks, the current risk of getting monkeypox in the general public is very low.

The table below shows a comparison of monkeypox and COVID-19.

FAQ	Monkeypox	COVID-19
How widespread is it?	Typically found in or linked to central and western African countries. Since May 2022, cases have been identified in many other countries, including the U.S. However, monkeypox is much less common than COVID-19.	Hundreds of millions of cases since the start of the pandemic in early 2020, and still spreading widely throughout the world
When was it first identified?	Not a new virus – around since 1958.	A novel virus - around since 2019.
How does it spread?	By very close and/or prolonged contact with someone with symptoms, including through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close physical/intimate skin-to-skin contact, including sex • Contact with contaminated materials (towels, bedding and clothing) • Respiratory droplets spread by close and prolonged face-to-face interaction Monkeypox is much less contagious than COVID-19.	Through tiny droplets in the air by breathing, talking, sneezing, or coughing. It is extremely infectious. Can spread from others who have the virus, even if they don't have symptoms.
What are the signs and symptoms?	Rash with firm bumps on face, hands, feet, body, or genitals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fever • Low energy • Chills • Swollen lymph nodes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fever • Trouble breathing • Headaches • Loss of taste and smell • Cough • Stomach issues • Muscle aches • Cold symptoms
How is it prevented?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid close physical contact with people who have symptoms, including sores or rashes • Talk to your sexual partner/s about any recent illness and be aware of new or unexplained sores or rashes • Avoid contact with , contaminated materials • Wear PPE (mask, gloves, gown) if you can't avoid close contact with someone who has symptoms • Practice good hand hygiene 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get vaccinated and boosted • Wear a mask in indoor settings and crowded outdoor settings • Meet others outdoors or in well ventilated spaces
Are there variants?	All viruses change and evolve over time. However, the monkeypox virus mutates slower than coronaviruses. There are two known families or “clades” of monkeypox virus. The clade recently identified in Europe, Canada, and in the United States is the West African clade, which tends to cause less severe disease.	There are many variants of SARS-CoV-2 (virus that causes COVID-19). This virus mutates rapidly.
If you have symptoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always stay home if you're sick • Cover any blisters or skin lesions • Isolate from others and wear a mask if you have to be around others • Contact a health care provider right away to talk about diagnosis, testing, and treatment options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always stay home if you're sick • Get tested. • If you test positive, isolate from others • Contact a health care provider right away to talk about treatment options