

# MEDIA RELEASE

ERIE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH



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## Erie County Department of Health provides monkeypox public health update

Erie, PA — Erie County Department of Health informs the public that there were two cases of monkeypox in Erie County reported in the second week of August. This brings the total cases in the county to three.

The U.S. government has declared monkeypox a public health emergency. Monkeypox is a contagious disease caused by the same family of viruses that causes smallpox. Anyone can get monkeypox, regardless of age, gender or sexual orientation.

### Symptoms and testing

Symptoms include fever, swollen lymph nodes, headache, muscle aches, backache, a general feeling of discomfort and exhaustion. Typically within 1-3 days after the fever, a rash or blisters (raised, fluid-filled bumps) develop, which can appear anywhere on the body. The rash usually goes through several stages before crusting and falling off, usually taking 2-4 weeks.

Consult your primary care provider if you have any of these symptoms for possible testing. Test results will help determine appropriate care and treatment if needed.

### Preventing spread

The monkeypox virus does not spread easily between people; however, it can spread from person-to-person through close, intimate contact. It can also spread by touching objects such as fabrics that have been used by someone with monkeypox. If you are pregnant, you can possibly pass on the virus to your unborn child.

The incubation period (the time between exposure and when symptoms appear) is 5 to 21 days, during this time, a person does not have symptoms and may feel fine. A person is contagious from the time they begin their first symptoms, this includes the symptoms before the rash starts.

To prevent spread:

- Avoid close, skin-to-skin contact (like hugging, cuddling, kissing or having sex) with someone who has a rash or scabs that may possibly be caused by monkeypox.
- Do not share or touch potentially contaminated items such as eating utensils, cups, bedding, towels, or clothing of a person with monkeypox.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

If you are sick with monkeypox, stay at home. If you have a rash or other symptoms, stay in a separate room or area away from people or pets you live with.

## **Vaccination**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends vaccination for people who have been diagnosed with, exposed to, or who are at higher risk of being exposed to monkeypox, including those who are sexually active with multiple or anonymous partners. Monkeypox vaccine is available for free in Erie County with eligibility qualifications.

For information and guidance on monkeypox, including testing sites and vaccination eligibility for residents of Erie County, contact the Erie County Department of Health at [ecdhinfo@eriecountypa.gov](mailto:ecdhinfo@eriecountypa.gov) or 814-451-6700 option 2.

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