



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

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How to Safely Do Laundry If You Have or Take Care of Someone with Monkeypox

As of Aug. 16, 2022

*For questions or additional guidance,
contact 814-451-6700 option 2 or ecdh@eriecountypa.gov*

Monkeypox is a contagious disease that can spread by coming into contact with clothing, bedding, or items used by an infected person. The monkeypox virus can live on certain surfaces up to 15 days, making cleaning, disinfecting, and doing laundry very important in stopping the spread of the virus.

Reducing the Chance of Spreading Monkeypox

- People with monkeypox should handle and do their own laundry if possible.
- Do not use dry-cleaning services or drop off for someone else to clean.
- If assistance is needed, ask the person to wear a well fitted surgical or KN95 mask and disposable gloves.
- Store soiled laundry in a non-mesh, machine washable bag or a hard, non-porous container that can be disinfected. Always keep soiled clothing separate from other household members' laundry.

When doing laundry

- Never shake items as this can spread infectious particles. Gently put items, along with the bag, in the washing machine.
- Wash with regular detergent. Laundry sanitizers are not necessary.
- When possible, wash at the highest temperature setting or with hot water.
- Machine dry at highest temperature setting. Air-drying is acceptable.
- For items that cannot be machine washed, wash in shower, bathtub, or sink. Disinfect the area after you have finished washing.
- For items that have come into contact with rash or lesions (such as watches, belts, hats, etc.,) use appropriate disinfectant from the US Environmental Protection Agency's List ([bit.ly/epa-disinfectant-list](https://www.epa.gov/disinfectant)).

When doing someone else's laundry

- Only launder an infected person's clothes if absolutely necessary and as few times as possible.
- At minimum, wear a surgical mask and disposable gloves.
- Cover as much skin as possible by wearing long sleeves and pants.
 - Do not wear unnecessary items, such as jewelry.
- After contaminated items have been put into the washer, immediately change clothes and launder items.
 - Keep items separate until washed or disinfected.
- Remove and dispose of gloves in a sealed bag
 - How to properly remove gloves can found on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) https://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/hcp/ppe-training/n95respirator_gown/doffing_21.html#:~:text=Pinch%20that%20glove%20and%20lift,Dispose%20of%20the%20gloves.
- Immediately use an alcohol based sanitizer (60% or higher) or wash your hands with soap and water.
 - Do NOT touch your face, eyes, or any exposed skin until your hands have been properly cleaned.