

Monkeypox update

Monkeypox is a rare infectious disease, but there are several of cases in the UK.

Monkeypox is a viral infection usually associated with travel to West Africa. It is usually a mild self-limiting illness, passed on by very close contact with someone with monkeypox and most people recover within a few weeks.

The virus can be passed on if there is close contact between people and the risk to the UK population is low. Monkeypox can affect anyone, and it can be passed on through close physical contact like kissing, skin-to-skin, sex or sharing things like clothing, bedding and towels. However, recent cases have been detected in gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men. We advise this group in particular to be alert to any unusual rashes or lesions on any part of their body, especially their genitalia, and to contact a sexual health service if they have concerns.

If you have concerns please avoid close contact with others until you have been assessed by a clinician. Your call or discussion will be treated sensitively and confidentially.

Signs and symptoms

- Recent unexpected/unusual spots, ulcers or blisters anywhere on your body
- Fever
- Muscle aches
- Chills and exhaustion
- Headaches
- Swollen glands

Call to action

Contact a sexual health clinic if you have a rash with blisters and you've been either:

- in close contact, including sexual contact, with someone who has or might have monkeypox (even if they've not been tested yet) in the past 3 weeks
- to West or Central Africa in the past 3 weeks

Tell the person you speak to if you've had close contact with someone who has or might have monkeypox, or if you've recently travelled to central or west Africa.

Do not go to a sexual health clinic without contacting them first. Stay at home and avoid close contact with other people until you've been told what to do.

Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust Sexual Health contact numbers:

- Rubin Clinic, Maidstone Hospital - **07955 434087**
- Riverside Clinic, Gravesham Community Hospital - **07955 434081**

Please note, these phonelines are manned Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm.

For alternative Sexual Health Services please click on the link below:

- Find a [sexual health clinic](#)

Your call or discussion will be treated sensitively and confidentially.

If you are not able to contact a sexual health clinic you should call 111.