



Mpox

Frequently Asked Questions



1. What is mpox?

Mpox is a viral disease transmitted through direct contact with infected person including with their bodily fluids, contaminated personal items such as clothing, utensils or through sexual contact.

2. What are the signs and symptoms of mpox?

The signs and symptoms include skin rash (blisters and sores), fever, sore throat, headache, body aches, back pain, low energy (fatigue) and swollen lymph nodes.

3. How is mpox transmitted?

Mpox is transmitted through person-to-person contact with someone who has the disease, for example:

- face-to-face (talking or breathing)
- skin-to-skin (touching or vaginal/anal)
- mouth-to-mouth (kissing)
- mouth-to-skin (oral sex or kissing the skin)
- respiratory droplets or short-range aerosol transmission from prolonged close contact
- contact with contaminated materials, including bedding, towels and clothes
- sexual intercourse
- pregnancy, during or after birth, through skin-to-skin contact.

4. Who is at higher risk of contracting mpox?

Anyone can get mpox. However, those at higher risk of contracting the viral disease include health-care workers, staff working at screening posts at points of entry, travellers, people nursing an infected person(s), people handling wild animals, children, pregnant women, immunocompromised individuals, people with multiple sexual partners and men who have sex with men.

5. Can mpox be transmitted through contaminated objects?

Yes, mpox can be transmitted through direct contact with infected lesions or sores, or through contact with materials used by an infected person (utensils, clothing and bedding, among others), scabs or body fluids, as well as through respiratory droplets during prolonged face-to-face interaction.

6. How can mpox transmission be prevented?

To prevent mpox transmission:

- avoid close contact with individuals who are infected
- avoid touching their personal belongings
- limit your number of sexual partners
- refrain from contact with wild animals or consuming bushmeat.

7. Do we have an mpox vaccine?

Yes, there is a mpox vaccination.

Despite availability of mpox vaccine in the world, it is yet to be availed to Kenya and the government is working around the clock to secure some doses for our people especially the high risk groups.

However, there has been some misinformation attributing vaccination against mpox with the idea that westerners want to harm Africans through introduction of mpox vaccines. This is false.

Fact: vaccines are a crucial tool in protecting public health and preventing the spread of infectious diseases like Mpox. The development and distribution of vaccines are guided by scientific research and global health organizations, including the World Health Organization (WHO).

8. What should I do if I suspect I have mpox?

If you suspect you have mpox, it is crucial to seek immediate medical attention or contact your local authority, including community health promoters. Avoid contact with others until you have been tested to prevent further transmission.

9. What is the risk of mpox during pregnancy?

Pregnant individuals should exercise caution regarding mpox exposure. Contracting the virus during pregnancy poses risks to both the foetus and newborn, including the potential for pregnancy loss, stillbirth and complications for the mother. Close contact with individuals infected with mpox should be avoided.

10. Is mpox infection severe?

While most mpox infections resolve without severe complications, some individuals may experience severe illness. Factors such as immune status can influence the severity of infection. Pregnant women, children and those with underlying health conditions are at a higher risk of severe disease.

11. There has been confusion about whether Mpox is a sexually transmitted infection (STI)?

Fact: Mpox is not classified as a sexually transmitted infection (STI). While Mpox can be spread through close physical contact, including sexual contact, it is not limited to sexual transmission.

12. Is contact with monkeys or animals the main way Mpox is spread?

No, the fact: While Mpox was first discovered in monkeys, the primary mode of transmission in the current outbreaks is human-to-human contact. Mpox spreads through direct contact with an infected person's skin lesions, body fluids, or respiratory droplets during close face-to-face interactions, as well as through contact with contaminated objects like bedding or clothing.

13. Is Mpox another COVID-19 scam meant to distract people?

No, the fact: Mpox and COVID-19 are two distinct diseases caused by different viruses. Mpox has been known to science since the 1970s and primarily affected Central and West African countries until recent global outbreaks.

14. Has WHO conducted laboratory manipulation of the virus, turning smallpox into Mpox?

No, the fact: There is no scientific evidence at all to support the claim that the WHO or any other organization has manipulated the smallpox virus to create Mpox. Mpox is caused by the Mpox virus, which is related to, but distinct from, the smallpox virus. Small Pox was declared officially eradicated in **1980** by WHO.

15. Is the Government going to reintroduce public health measures like lockdowns, social distancing and remote work including global lockdown?

No, the fact is: The World Health Organization (WHO) does not have the authority to impose global lockdowns on Countries. WHO role is to provide guidance on the best preventive or treatment measures which countries need to put in place. Decisions about taking drastic measures including lockdowns are made by individual countries based on their specific public health situations and needs. The Government will be guided by preventive measures provided above.

For more information, contact the Ministry of Health hotline at: 719 or 0729 471414 / 0732 353535