

## What is Mpox (monkeypox)? Patient information about it's cause, symptoms, and treatment

Mpox (formerly called as Monkeypox) is a rare viral disease that belongs to the same family of viruses as smallpox. The virus was first identified in 1958 in monkeys kept for research, hence the name "monkeypox". The disease occurs primarily in remote parts of Central and West Africa, where it is believed to be transmitted to humans through contact with infected animals, primarily rodents and primates.

There have been multiple outbreaks across the globes since 2022. There have been few cases of mpox in recent travellers in Lahore.

### Symptoms of Mpox:

The symptoms of monkeypox are similar to but milder than those of smallpox. These include fever,

- headache,
- muscle aches,
- fever
- sore throat, cough
- fatigue
- The rash often begins on the face then spreads to the trunk and limbs. The rash progresses to raised bumps that eventually fill with fluid and then scab over and fall off.

### Incubation period:

It may take 4-21 days before symptoms start after exposure to the virus. Usual incubation period is 1-2 weeks. Monkeypox is usually a self-limited disease that runs its course in two to four weeks. However, in some cases, complications can occur, including secondary bacterial infections, pneumonia, and encephalitis.

### Treatment of mpox:

There is no specific treatment for monkeypox, but supportive care can help manage symptoms.

### Vaccination:

Vaccination against smallpox may provide some protection against monkeypox, but its effectiveness is not well established. It is recommended currently in high-risk patients, especially in people with HIV and homosexual orientation. Health care workers who look after patients of mpox should be immunised too.

### **Prevention of mpox:**

Prevention measures include avoiding contact with infected animals, practicing good hygiene, such as frequent hand washing, and wearing protective clothing when handling animals or animal products. If you suspect that you have been exposed to monkeypox or are experiencing symptoms, seek medical attention immediately.

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