

# Mpox: how to lower your risk.

Mpox is caused by a virus not commonly seen in Canada, but it has arrived. No matter your gender or sexual orientation, anyone can get infected and spread the virus if they have close contact with an infected person or their contaminated objects.

Find more information for those at risk [here](#).

## WHAT IS MPOX?

It is a virus that causes a rash, which may look like pimples or blisters, often with an earlier flu-like illness. Mpox can spread through close, personal, often skin-to-skin contact including:

- Direct contact (including any sexual contact, e.g. oral, anal) with mpox rash, sores, or scabs from a person with mpox.
- Contact with objects, fabrics (clothing, bedding, or towels), and surfaces that have been used by someone with mpox.
- Contact with respiratory secretions, through kissing and other face-to-face contact.

## WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF MPOX?

Symptoms usually start within two weeks of exposure to the virus.

- The first symptoms may be flu-like, such as fever, headache, muscle aches and backache, swollen lymph nodes, chills, or exhaustion.
- Within one to three days of these symptoms beginning, a rash or sores develop. They can be on or near the genitals or anus, as well as on other areas like the hands, feet, chest, or face.
- The sores will go through several stages, including scabs, before healing.
- The sores can look like pimples or blisters and may be painful or itchy.
- Sores may be inside the body, including the mouth, vagina, or anus.

It is important to note that this specific outbreak often has a more unusual presentation which includes:

- Presentation of only a few or even just a single lesion
- Absence of skin lesions in some cases, with anal pain and bleeding
- Lesions may appear at different stages and they may only appear in the genital or perineal/perianal area and do not spread further
- The appearance of lesions before other symptoms begin