

To All Members of the Campus Community:

I hope you are enjoying the summer break and I look forward to welcoming everyone back to Ann Arbor for the upcoming fall 2022 term.

In preparation for the arrival of more campus community members, the university's Public Health Response team has been closely monitoring the evolving monkeypox virus (MPV) situation and its potential impact on the U-M community.

The incidence of confirmed MPV cases in the U.S. has been steadily climbing over the recent weeks, yet the risk to the general public, which includes Washtenaw County, remains low. Most people affected in the current outbreak have generally reported having had sustained [physical contact](#) with someone who has MPV.

What is MPV?

MPV is a painful and potentially serious viral illness that can be transmitted through direct (often skin-to-skin) contact with an infected person's body fluids or MPV lesions. MPV is part of the same family of viruses as the variola virus, the virus that causes smallpox.

Clinical symptoms due to MPV generally start 1-2 weeks after exposure. People with MPV may first develop a flu-like illness with fever, headache, muscle aches, exhaustion, and swollen lymph nodes. A characteristic rash, which can appear like blisters, sores or pimples, occurs a few days later. MPV is rarely fatal and most cases resolve on their own after 2-4 weeks.

How does MPV differ from COVID-19?

MPV is not nearly as contagious as COVID-19. Unlike COVID-19, which primarily spreads through respiratory or airborne droplets, MPV generally requires direct contact for transmission to occur. The difference in how the two are spread puts the general public at lower risk for MPV.

How is U-M preparing for the fall 2022 term in regard to MPV?

Our U-M Public Health Response team has been working very closely with colleagues at the Washtenaw County Health Department to coordinate evaluation and management strategies for the campus. The University Health Service (UHS) has trained staff to recognize and test students who present with suspicious lesions or rashes.

Are vaccines and treatments available for MPV?

Vaccine and antiviral medications are currently in very limited supply. The Washtenaw County Health Department is currently the only site for distribution, with a focus on confirmed cases, identified close contacts, and some identified priority groups. Updated information is available at [their website](#).

What should I do to protect myself from MPV?

There are several preventive measures each of us can take to protect ourselves and one another from MPV:

- *If you are exposed to someone with MPV or have a rash that you think might be MPV, contact your healthcare provider as soon as possible.*
- *If you have a suspicious rash, stay away from others, cover all of the lesions and wear a mask until you can see your healthcare provider.*
- Wash your hands with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer, especially before eating or touching your face and after you use the bathroom.
- Avoid direct, skin-to-skin contact with people who have MPV lesions or rashes that look like they may be MPV.
- Talk to the people with whom you have come in direct contact, including intimate and sexual contact, about their general health and any recent rashes or sores.
- Avoid contact with any objects, fabrics or materials, such as bedding, clothing and towels, that have been in contact with an infected person.

To learn more about MPV, visit the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), the [Michigan Department of Health and Human Services](#), [Washtenaw County Health Department](#), and [UHS](#) MPV webpages.

I appreciate your dedication and contributions to our campus community's health and safety.

Sincerely,

Robert D. Ernst, M.D.
Chief Health Officer