

UKHSA issues self-isolation guidance for people with monkeypox infection

The advice follows [initial guidance](#) published on 30 May 2022 and will help people to look after themselves during their isolation period and protect others by reducing the risk of spreading the infection.

Household members are at the highest risk of becoming infected from a case within their house. The new guidance advises people with monkeypox infection to take steps to try and limit transmission within the household.

Monkeypox infection mainly spreads between people through direct, skin-to-skin contact, including sexual contact. Infection can also be spread via contaminated objects such as linen and soft furnishings.

The guidance advises that, where possible, cases are encouraged to sleep and eat in a separate room and use a separate bathroom to their household if possible. Good hygiene measures, to follow at all times, have also been set out.

Where the use of a separate room isn't possible, cases should avoid physical contact and keep at least 3 steps (1 metre) away from all household members. It is particularly important that they avoid close contact with young children, pregnant women and immunosuppressed people as they may be at higher risk of serious illness.

Other advice includes keeping laundry separate from other household members and avoiding any close contact with pets. [The full advice](#) can be viewed on GOV.UK.

Dr Susan Hopkins, Chief Medical Advisor at UKHSA, said:

Self-isolation is an important measure for protecting others from monkeypox.

Staying at home and doing all we can to avoid close contact with other people in the household will prevent the spread of this virus.

We know that self-isolation is not easy for some so it's important that people ask for support if needed.

The guidance also advises on the criteria that cases should meet before they can end their isolation.

Individuals should:

- not have had a high temperature for at least 72 hours

- ensure all lesions, anywhere on the body, have scabbed over – additionally, any scabs on the face, arms and hands must have fallen off, with a fresh layer of skin formed underneath
- have had no new lesions form in the previous 48 hours
- have no lesions in their mouth

Cases will have been provided with contact details of the medical team providing their care and they will be in contact regularly. They should call this team if they have any concerns – and ending isolation should be on the advice of this team.

On ending self-isolation, people should keep any remaining lesions (that are not on the face, arms or hands) covered with clothing. They should avoid close contact with young children, pregnant women and immunosuppressed people until the scabs on all their lesions have fallen off and a fresh layer of skin has formed underneath.

Self-isolation guidance also recognises that staying at home for a prolonged period can be difficult, frustrating and lonely for some, particularly if they don't have much space or access to a garden.

People who are self-isolating are advised to keep in touch with family and friends by phone or social media and seek support if they need it, for example by accessing the [Every Mind Matters](#) website.