



## Monkeypox and Wabash

Dear Wabash Community,

Monkeypox has been declared a Public Health Emergency by the World Health Organization and the United States Department of Health and Human Services. The United States leads the world in the number of monkeypox cases. As of August 11, there were 10,392 confirmed cases in the United States, with 77 cases spread across Indiana. **We are particularly concerned about the potential spread of Monkeypox in congregate living settings (fraternities and dormitories), as well as athletes who participate in contact sports.** We want to ensure you receive accurate information regarding this disease and the possible risks it might pose to you.

### **Key Facts:**

- The best resource for the most up-to-date information on Monkeypox is the CDC page ([www.cdc.gov/monkeypox](http://www.cdc.gov/monkeypox)). The CDC Monkeypox Fact Sheet is also helpful ([https://www.in.gov/health/erc/files/MPX\\_Social\\_Gatherings\\_Safer\\_Sex-508.pdf](https://www.in.gov/health/erc/files/MPX_Social_Gatherings_Safer_Sex-508.pdf)). The Indiana Department of Health also has a resource page at: [monkeypox.health.in.gov](http://monkeypox.health.in.gov)
- **If you are sexually active, it is critical that you use safe sex practices** (<https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/sexualhealth/index.html>). It is important that you ask your partner(s) if they have had suspicious symptoms or rashes *before* engaging in sexual activity.
- Monkeypox is caused by a virus similar to the one that causes Smallpox.
- While monkeypox is currently more common in particular demographic groups, it will eventually spread to all social groups.
- Monkeypox is rarely fatal, but can cause significant debility and in some cases excruciating pain, particularly with lesions in the mouth and genital area.
- **Symptoms may include:** Fever, headache, muscle aches and backache, swollen lymph nodes, chills, exhaustion, respiratory symptoms (e.g., sore throat, nasal congestion, or cough), a rash (<https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/clinicians/clinical-recognition.html>) that may be located on or near the genitals (penis, testicles, labia, and vagina) or anus but could also be on other areas like the hands, feet, chest, face, or mouth. The rash will go through several stages, including scabs, before healing. The rash can look like pimples or blisters and may be painful or itchy.
- It is spread person-to-person through close personal contact, usually through exposure to the rash, scabs, or body fluids of someone with the disease. This can include oral, anal, and vaginal sex or touching the genitals. Hugging, massage, kissing, and prolonged face-to-face contact can also spread the virus.
- It can also be spread by touching objects, fabrics (clothing, bedding, or towels), fetish gear, sex toys, and surfaces that have been used by someone with Monkeypox.
- A person with Monkeypox can spread it from the time symptoms start until the rash has fully healed and fresh skin has grown over the lesions. This can take 2-4 weeks or longer during which time the person must be in isolation at home or in a facility away from others. **If you become infected, it could result in missing up to a month or longer of in-person school.**



**What to do if you think you have Monkeypox:**

- Isolate away from others and tell them to avoid objects you have been in contact with (sheets, towels, furniture, etc.).
- Contact the Student Health Center by contacting the College Nurse using the “Messages” tab of your Student Health Portal at <https://wabash.studenthealthportal.com>

**Prevention of Infection:**

- Vaccines are available, but in short supply. They are currently indicated for the following persons:
  - People who have been identified by public health officials as a contact of someone with monkeypox.
  - People who are aware that one of their sexual partners in the past 2 weeks has been diagnosed with monkeypox.
  - People who had multiple sexual partners in the past 2 weeks in an area with known monkeypox.
- If you meet one of the above criteria, you can register with the Indiana Department of Health to receive JYNNEOS vaccine when available at: <https://redcap.isdh.in.gov/surveys/?s=JLK7MRJN48>
- Other recommendations: (<https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/prevention.html>)

**Treatment of Infection:**

- The antiviral tecovirimat (TPOXX) is effective at treating the disease, but is in extremely short supply. Medical professionals must go through a special process to prescribe the medication.