



Mpox – caring for yourself at home



It's important to take care of yourself when you have mpox (previously called monkeypox) or think you might have it.

Mpox symptoms usually last for 2-4 weeks. Here are some things you can do to look after yourself and stay comfortable, as you recover.



Confirm the diagnosis

- Contact your local STI clinic, or your GP, if you think you have mpox.
- They will arrange for you to be assessed and tested.
- Always phone ahead before visiting your GP or STI clinic.
- If it's outside office hours (9am-5pm), stay home; contact your STI clinic or GP on the next working day.
- Stay home: avoid close contact with other people, including sharing towels or bedding, until you've been advised what to do. You will be told how long you need to isolate for.
- See link below for more info on how to isolate and finishing isolation.



In an emergency

- Most people with mpox can care for themselves at home.
 - But sometimes urgent or emergency medical care is needed
 - In an emergency dial 999/112, tell the operator that you have (or might have) mpox
- You will need emergency care if:**
- You have trouble breathing
 - You have chest pain
 - Your neck is stiff
 - You feel confused or find it hard to speak or move
 - You are losing consciousness
 - You have a fit (seizure or convulsion)



To help pain and fever

- Medicines like paracetamol and ibuprofen can help you feel better. Always read the label.
- Contact your GP, out of hours GP service or your STI clinic if your pain is severe and you are not able to treat it at home.
- Your GP or clinic doctor may prescribe stronger pain relief.
- If it hurts to poo, speak to your pharmacist, laxatives or medicine to soften your poo can help.
- If you do need to leave the house for a doctor's appointment, wear a mask and keep your rash covered.



To help your rash or blisters

- **Try not to touch or scratch** your rash or any blisters. This could spread the rash or cause it to become infected.
- **Wash your hands often** with soap and water. If you do accidentally touch the rash, wash your hands immediately. If you have rash on your hands, be gentle when washing your hands.
- **For itch** - Try antihistamine tablets and creams like calamine lotion or petroleum jelly (wash hands after use).
- **Warm baths** (using oats or products for itchy skin) may soothe your skin.
- If your rash is in or near your anus (bum hole) or genitals (penis, testicles or vulva) sitting in shallow warm water in the bath or a clean basin can help.
- **Don't shave** the area until the blisters are healed & scabs have fallen off.



Other tips to help you feel better

- Eat healthily and get plenty of rest to help your body fight the infection.
- Eating high fibre foods, like fruit, vegetables and whole grains, can help you to poo more easily. This is important if you have blisters or a rash in or near your anus (bum hole).
- Drink plenty of water to stay hydrated. If your mouth is sore try rinsing with salt water, or speak to your doctor or pharmacist for advice.
- Isolation can be stressful. Make sure to stay in touch with loved ones, friends and family. If you need extra psychological support chat to your doctor or nurse or contact the MPOWER team counselling service: <https://mpower.hivireland.ie/speak-to-our-team/>



Think about your close contacts

- You may be contacted by your local Department of Public Health for contact tracing.
- Contact tracing is important to help stop the spread of the virus.
- It can be helpful to make a list of the names and phone numbers of anyone you were in close contact with from **the day before** your symptoms began until you went into isolation.
- Make sure to include anyone you had sex or intimate contact with, anyone living in your home and anyone who stayed in your home during this time.



For more information on mpox go to:
<https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/monkeypox/>
For information on self isolating:
<https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/zoonotic/monkeypox/guidance/>