GGD
Amsterdam

Monkeypox

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The monkeypox virus usually only occurs in Africa. There are also people who are currently contracting the disease in Europe. Monkeypox has also been diagnosed in a number of people in the Netherlands, especially men who have sexual intercourse with men.

Monkeypox symptoms

About 5 to 21 days after you have been in contact with someone with monkeypox, you may become ill yourself. If you have monkeypox, you often first suffer from:

- Fever
- Headache
- Sore muscles
- Swollen lymph nodes
- Fatigue

Then you get a rash, usually on your face. This starts with spots that turn into blisters. The blisters dry, scab over, and then fall off the skin. European men who now have monkeypox have a rash mainly around the anus and penis.

Monkeypox usually goes away without medical treatment. Monkeypox can be dangerous for people with a very weak immune system.

Contagiousness

People experiencing monkeypox symptoms are contagious. Once all symptoms of the disease have passed and all the scabs have fallen off the skin, you are no longer contagious.

What should you do?

Have you been somewhere where there was someone who had the virus? Or have you been in close contact with someone who has the virus? In the following weeks, pay close attention to whether you experience any symptoms. Are you experiencing any symptoms? If so, contact your doctor immediately, even if you are not sure.

What's next:

- Keep an eye out for monkeypox symptoms, especially for a rash around your penis and anus.
- Do you have any blisters? Call your doctor. Tell them you think you might have monkeypox.
- Stay at home until you are completely cured. This is how you prevent the virus from spreading.

Monkeypox is not an STI

Monkeypox is not a true STI, as it can be transmitted without sex. You can also get it by being around someone for an extended period of time.

The virus spreads mainly via:

- Skin abnormalities around the mouth, nose, eyes
- Skin abnormalities on and around the penis, vagina, and anus
- Large droplets from blisters or from your mouth

The virus is now mainly found in men who have sex with men, but in Britain infections have also been found in other people. It may be a coincidence that the virus was first identified in men who have sex with men. The ways in which this virus might spread are still under investigation.

By acting promptly in case of symptoms and good contact tracing, we can prevent the virus from spreading further.

Questions

Do you have general questions about monkeypox? You can call the Public Health Service of Amsterdam (GGD) on 020 555 5337.