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**Information letter for a person with mpox**

Dear Sir/Madam,

Your test shows that you are infected with mpox. This is not good news and you may have questions about this. It is important that you keep to a number of rules in your daily life. You can read more about this below. Although it may not always be easy, it is very important to comply with these rules. By doing so, you help to contain the spread of the virus. If your complaints worsen, please contact your GP.

**The measures that apply to you depend on:**

* **your symptoms**
* **whether you can cover the mpox spots on your skin**

**We distinguish between two phases in this regard.**

**You will start in Phase 1.**

**You may only proceed to Phase 2 if none of the points in Phase 1 apply to you any longer.**

**Phase 1:**

You are in Phase 1 if one or both of the following points apply to you:

1. In the past three days, I have had a fever or symptoms caused by the monkeypox virus (including cough, headache, fatigue, back pain and abdominal pain).
2. Because of the monkeypox virus, I have spots on my skin in places I cannot cover with clothing (this includes spots on your hands, face, neck or scalp).

**Phase 1 measures: self-isolation and strict rules of conduct**

It is very important that you go into self-isolation immediately. Stay at home and do not allow any visitors.

This way, you prevent that you infect other people.

Keep to the following rules during your self-isolation:

* Avoid contact with others (when avoiding contact is genuinely impossible, keep a distance of at least 1.5 metres).
* Abstain from sexual contact, French kissing and skin-to-skin contact.
* Avoid contact with mammals (including pets).
* Cough and sneeze into your elbow.
* Wash your hands often.
* If you share your home with household members, sleep in a separate bedroom by yourself.
* If possible, use a toilet/bathroom that is not used by others.
* Clean your bedroom and your own toilet/bathroom by yourself where possible.
* Regularly clean frequently touched surfaces in your home (such as doorhandles and light switches).
* Do not share any household items (such as towels, tooth brush, bed linen, clothing, plates and cups).
* Do your own laundry and keep your laundry separate from that of household members. Wash your items separately, at least at 60 °C and using a long cycle. (If this is impossible, then wash items at 40 °C using enough detergent and a full cycle, and then preferably iron them or put them in the dryer.)
* Put your waste in a bin bag in the room in which you are self-isolating. Put out your waste at least daily. Close the bin bag without pushing out the air, and then let a household member dispose of the bag. Wash your hands afterwards and ask the household member who disposed of the waste bag to also wash their hands.

Make sure there is no tear in the bin bag. If there is a tear, then place a second bin bag around the torn bag.

* Do not donate any blood.

If both points in Phase 1 no longer apply to you, then proceed to Phase 2.

**Phase 2:**

You are in Phase 2 if both of the following points apply to you:

1. For the past three days, I have no longer had any symptoms caused by the monkeypox virus (see above). Proctitis symptoms (inflammation of the rectum) are an exception to this, and are allowed in Phase 2.
2. If I (still) have spots on my skin, I can cover them with clothing.

**Phase 2 measures: no more self-isolation, apply strict rules of conduct**

You no longer have to self-isolate, but the following strict rules apply in your daily life:

* Cover the mpox spots on your skin with clothing or bandages.
* Wash your hands often.
* Avoid physical contact, including sexual contact and kissing. It is not necessary to sleep separately from your housemate or partner.
* Avoid contact with mammals (such as cats and dogs).
* Avoid contact with vulnerable groups, such as young children (age 12 and under), pregnant women and/or people with a weakened immune system.
* Do not donate any blood.

At home:

* Do not share any personal household items (such as towels, tooth brush, clothing, plates and cups).
* Do your own laundry. Keep your laundry separate from that of household members and wash it separately as well. Wash your items at least at 60 °C using a long cycle. If this is not possible, then wash items at 40 °C using plenty of detergent and a full cycle, and then preferably iron them or put them in the dryer.
* If possible, use a toilet/bathroom that is not used by others. If you must use a shared toilet/bathroom, then clean it after each use.
* Clean your bedroom and your own toilet/bathroom by yourself where possible.
* Dispose of your own waste in a sealed bag.

**Work**

If you are in Phase 2, you may go to work in consultation with your company doctor or employer. This does not apply if you work in healthcare; in that case, you should follow the policy of the care facility. If you work with children (age 12 and under), pregnant women and/or people with a compromised immune system, you may only return to work once your all skin spots have completely healed.

**After the strict rules of conduct**

Once the spots on your skin have healed and the scabs have fallen off, you are no longer infectious and the strict rules of conduct no longer apply. However, if you also have an infection of the rectum, then you can only come out of self-isolation when you no longer experience pain due to this infection.

There are indications that the virus may also be transmitted through semen; transmission via vaginal fluid might be possible as well, but has not been investigated. It is advised to take the precaution of using condoms during (oral, vaginal or anal) sex for 5 weeks after the onset of mpox-symptoms.

**Source and contact tracing**

The Municipal Public Health Service (GGD) will discuss the following with you:

* what the monkeypox virus is exactly;
* where you may have been infected with the monkeypox virus;
* if and where you have infected other people;
* who you have had high-risk contact with. After discussing this with you, the GGD will call these people. These people can then take measures to prevent further spread of the virus.

**Make a list of your contacts**

If the GGD has not contacted you yet, you can prepare for your call with the GGD by making a list of the people you have been in contact with since your symptoms started. This concerns people you have been in close contact with, such as household members and people you have had sex with.

**Any questions?**

Click [here](https://www.rivm.nl/en/monkeypox) for more information about mpox and answers to frequently asked questions. If you have any other questions, please call [GGD telephone number].

**What is mpox?**

Mpox is a disease caused by the monkeypox virus that occurs mainly in countries in West and Central Africa. Mpox can spread from animals to humans and can then spread from human to human. The disease is usually mild in humans, The disease often – but not always – starts with symptoms such as a fever, a headache, muscle aches, swollen lymph nodes, chills and/or fatigue. After one to three days, a rash appears. This rash starts as spots that then blister. The rash usually starts on the face and then spreads to the rest of the body. Once the blisters dry out, scabs form that eventually fall off after two to three weeks.

**How is mpox transmitted?**

Mpox can be transmitted from one person to the next in a number of different ways. It can be transmitted through skin-to-skin contact (by touching the blisters) or through contact between the mucous membranes (of the mouth, nose and eyes), such as during French kissing and sex. The virus possibly also spreads through droplets from the blisters or from the mouth and throat (coughing, sneezing).

For information about the current situation, go to [Mpox | RIVM](https://www.rivm.nl/monkeypox-apenpokken).