

Monkeypox Guidance for Events during Pride Festival Season



Monkeypox cases are increasing in British Columbia and globally. It can affect anyone of any gender identity or sexual orientation, however, it has particularly impacted men in the 2SGBTQ+ community. This document provides suggestions for event organizers, business owners, community organizations and leaders to help prevent spread as people gather to celebrate during the Pride festival season.

About Monkeypox

Monkeypox (mpox, MPV) is an uncommon disease caused by infection with the monkeypox virus. It can spread from person to person through close contact with skin lesions, respiratory droplets, and mucous membranes (such as mouth, anus, and genitals) of a person with monkeypox.

The most commonly reported symptoms have been:

- Flu-like symptoms such as fever, chills, fatigue or body aches
- Skin lesions like sores or blisters that can occur before or after flu-like symptoms

Some people may experience symptoms differently. For example, most will develop lesions, but not all. Other people may develop lesions but experience no flu-like symptoms. If lesions do appear, they may or may not be painful, may be few or many, and are often found on the hands, anus and genital regions.

Before & During an Event

1) Educate staff and yourself about monkeypox.

While the overall risk for event attendees is likely low, monkeypox may spread in social gatherings through:

- Skin-to-skin contact
- Prolonged face-to-face interactions over several hours
- Exposure to towels, blankets or other items that contact skin and may have virus on them

Raise awareness by displaying information about monkeypox around the venue:

- See the fact sheet on [Monkeypox Recommendations for 2SGBTQ+ communities](#), including information on symptoms and spread.
- Information on [Safer Socializing and Sex on the SmartSexResource](#).
- Further information about monkeypox and testing can be found on the [BCCDC website](#).

2) Promote health information on monkeypox to your attendees before gathering.

- Provide attendees with information on how to minimize exposure to monkeypox and other viruses that could cause infections (e.g. COVID-19) while attending, such as:
 - Washing their hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds

- Using alcohol-based hand sanitizers after touching surfaces
- Covering their mouth and nose with a tissue or into their elbow when coughing or sneezing
- Strongly encourage people not to attend if they feel unwell or have any symptoms or if they have been advised by public health to limit their contact with others.
- Share messaging through multiple communication channels such as websites, social media accounts, and event apps. Extend messaging to any side events linked to a larger event.
- If your event includes international participants, add pre-travel advice in your messaging. Check out the [Government of Canada Travel Health Notifications](#) page for the latest advice.

3) Help your staff and participants follow good hygiene practices at the event.

- Ensure that multiple hand washing stations and alcohol-based hand sanitizer dispensers are accessible around the venue. Focus on areas near washrooms and where people eat or drink.
- Add signs to remind participants to wash their hands or use hand sanitizer, particularly around washrooms or places where people eat or drink.
- Provide appropriate personal protective equipment to your cleaning staff, including gloves and a well-fitting mask. Single-use disposable cleaning equipment is recommended.

4) Clean highly touched surfaces in common areas (e.g. toilets, food courts).

- Common areas should be cleaned at least twice in an eight-hour shift with disinfectant, following product instructions.
- Wash used personal items like utensils, plates, glasses, linens and towels in 60°C hot water with detergent followed by drying with hot air until completely dry. Most domestic washer do not reach temperatures this high so additional hot water can be added into the wash basin of a top-loading washer.
- Inform cleaning staff, food trucks and other vendors in advance about cleaning guidelines.

A Note about Cleaning & Monkeypox:

Monkeypox virus is harder to kill than the virus that causes COVID-19. It can survive for a longer time when dried onto surfaces. It can spread from contaminated surfaces to people, so increased surface cleaning is a good idea. You can kill the virus with:

- Household cleaners containing chloroxylenol
- A 0.5% solution of household bleach (1 part bleach, 9 parts water)
 - Use caution when diluting bleach. Use the FoodSafe bleach dilution calculator: foodsafety.ca/dilution-calculator.html
- 70% isopropyl alcohol in water but must be made fresh to retain efficacy

After an Event

Ensure event organizers are available to communicate with participants and public health officials for potential contact tracing purposes should transmission occur at your event.