

# SAFER SEX & MPOX

Mpox spreads through close, physical contact, which can include sexual contact and other forms of skin-to-skin contact, like kissing, hugging or cuddling someone with mpox or a recent exposure to mpox.



**Talk openly with partners about symptoms or recent mpox exposure before sexual or intimate contact.**

**If you or your partner/s has/have new or unexplained rash/sores or other symptoms, avoid skin-to-skin or sexual contact until getting checked out by a health-care provider or the rash has healed.**

**If you have new or unexplained rash/sores or other symptoms. Protect yourself and others by:**

- Reaching out to a health care provider to get checked out. If you don't have a provider or health insurance, visit a public health clinic near you.
- Taking a break from sex (oral, anal, vaginal) and intimate contact (kissing, hugging, cuddling) and/or attending social gatherings until two weeks after your second dose of the mpox vaccine.
- Isolating from others you live with.
- Wearing a mask and covering rashes if you need to be around others and when visiting a health care provider.

**Even if you feel well, there are ways to lower your chances of getting and spreading mpox, including:**

- Getting the two-dose mpox vaccine series and taking a temporary break from sexual activity until two weeks after your second dose to ensure best protection.
- Avoiding sharing items like towels, fetish gear, and sex toys. Wash your hands, fetish gear, sex toys, and any fabrics (bedding, towels, clothes) after having sex or intimate contact.
- Limiting your number of partners to reduce your likelihood of exposure.
- Staying connected to partners in case you need to reach out about any new symptoms or exposures.
- Considering using condoms (latex or polyurethane) to protect your anus, mouth, penis, or vagina from exposure. Condoms alone may not prevent all exposures since the rash can occur on other parts of the body.
- Masturbating together at a distance without touching each other, or having virtual sex.
- Having sex with your clothes on or covering areas where rash is present to reduce skin-to-skin contact.
- Limiting visits to spaces like back rooms, saunas, sex clubs, or private and public sex parties.

**Reach out to a health provider or your local health department if you have questions about vaccine and treatment options. Learn more at [go.cdph.ca.gov/mpox](https://go.cdph.ca.gov/mpox).**