

Monkeypox & mass gatherings

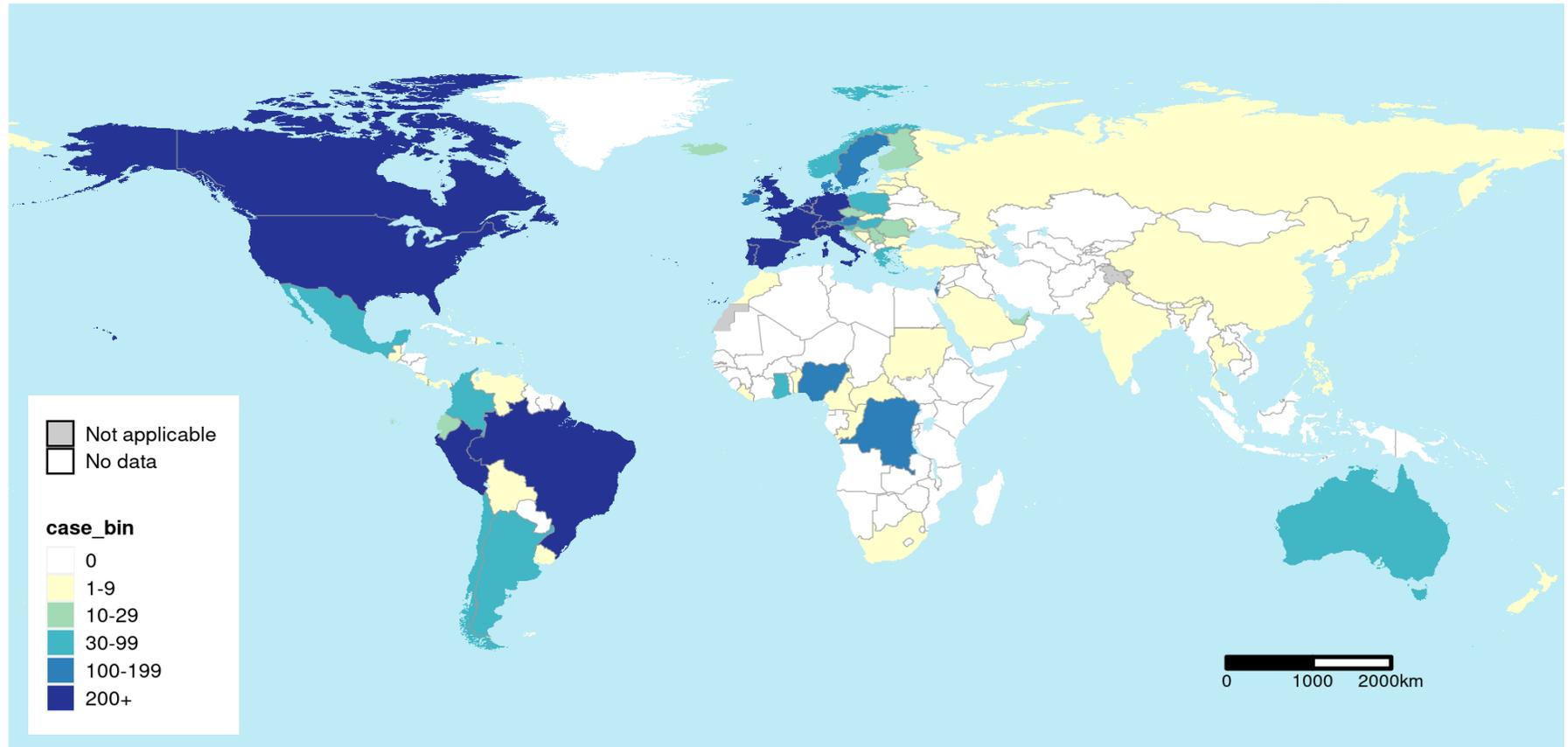
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MASS GATHERINGS
DURING A MONKEYPOX OUTBREAK

UPDATE NO.

2

Confirmed cases of monkeypox

from 1 Jan 2022 to 17 Aug 2022



The designations employed and the presentation of the material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of WHO concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. Dotted and dashed lines on maps represent approximate border lines for which there may not yet be full agreement.

Data Source: World Health Organization
Map Production: WHO Health Emergencies Programme
© WHO 2022. All rights reserved.



Photo: www.choosechicago.com

Why mass gatherings matter

Mass gatherings include activities and events of any size and type

All have in common:

- the attendance of small or large number of people
- in close proximity and
- prolonged and frequent interaction between people.

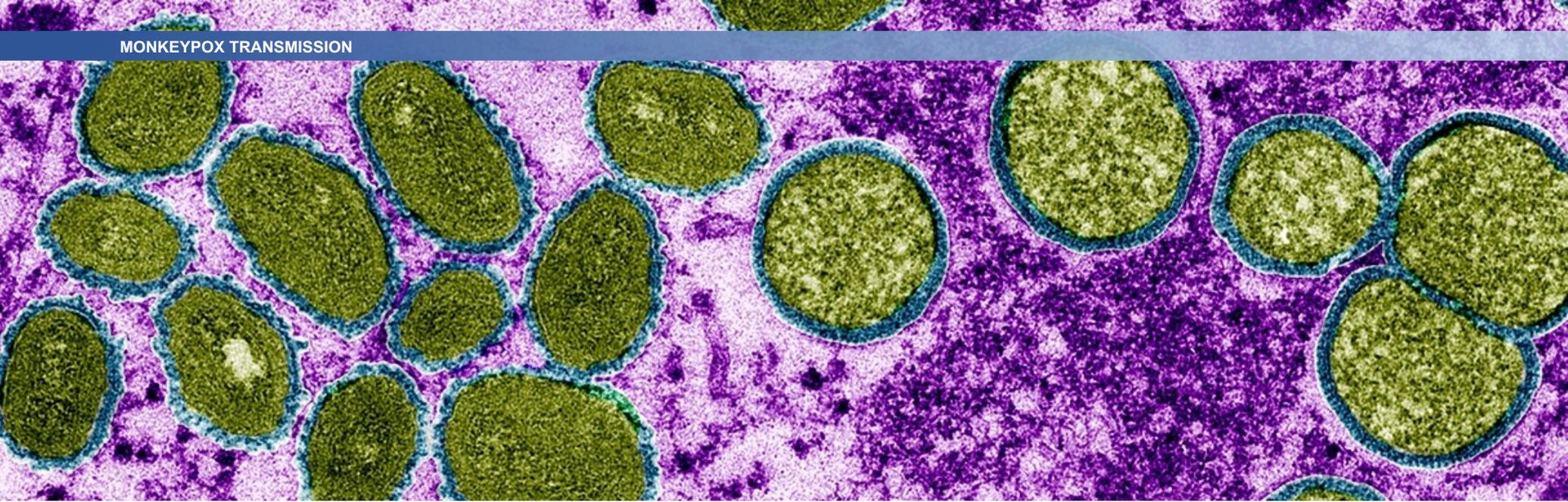


Photo: CDC

Monkeypox transmission

Monkeypox is caused by the monkeypox virus

- Monkeypox virus is transmitted by close contact with someone who has signs and symptoms (face-face, mouth-mouth, skin-skin, mouth-skin) or through contaminated particles of the virus if infected person has lesions in the mouth.

Monkeypox transmission and mass gatherings

Gatherings do not amplify transmission by themselves – it is the risky behaviour during events that matters

- Common exposure settings for monkeypox are gatherings like parties, parades, festivals, concerts, and other congregation of people that can create a conducive environment for the transmission.
- Gatherings are opportunities for information outreach and risk communication and community engagement (RCCE) activities.



A risk-based approach for holding safe gatherings

- WHO recommends that the decision-making process related to holding, modifying, postponing or cancelling gatherings should rely on a **risk-based approach**, *tailored to the characteristics of the event*.
- In the context of the current outbreak monkeypox-associated risks should be considered and factored in when planning a gathering event.

Postponing or cancelling gatherings in areas where monkeypox cases have been detected is currently not required as a default measure.



Fig. 3-step WHO Risk Assessment approach

Public health advice for event organizers during the current monkeypox outbreak

Consider if the event you are planning is most likely to be associated with risks of monkeypox transmission

- Link with health authorities and be aware of monkeypox situation in the host area
- Instruct event staff on how to manage a possible case of monkeypox during the event
- Facilitate the adoption of appropriate PHSM to prevent risk of transmission of monkeypox

<https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/WHO-MPX-Gatherings-2022.1>



World Health Organization

Public health advice for gatherings during the current monkeypox outbreak

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide public health advice to:

- host governments, public health authorities, national or international organizers and professional staff involved in the planning and delivery of gathering events;
- people organizing smaller gatherings or attending gatherings of any size and type.

Information on this outbreak is changing rapidly as we learn more. Check Monkeypox outbreak 2022 - Global (who.int) for the most up-to-date information.

Background

- The unexpected appearance of monkeypox in several WHO regions in the initial absence of epidemiological links to areas that have historically reported monkeypox suggests that there may have been undetected transmission for some time. Epidemiological investigations are ongoing.
- Most reported monkeypox cases have presented through sexual health or other health services in primary or secondary healthcare facilities.
- The identification of confirmed and suspected cases of monkeypox with no direct travel links to previously affected areas is atypical, and even a single case of monkeypox in a newly affected country is considered an outbreak.
- For the latest information on transmission, signs and symptoms please refer to *Clinical management and infection prevention and control for monkeypox: interim rapid response guidance*.

Scope

- Gatherings are events characterized by the concentration of people at a specific location for a specific purpose over a set period of time, and may be public or private, planned or spontaneous, recurrent or one-off, and also of varying size, duration and visibility. They can be of different nature, including, although not limited to, sports, religious, cultural, entertainment, political, business and health-campaign events.
- During gatherings, the likely high density and mobility of attendees (crowding) represents a conducive environment for close, prolonged and frequent interactions between people. Some gatherings may lead to attendees socially interacting with people previously unknown to them. For some, these new interactions could lead to sexual activity which can play a role in the spread of the monkeypox virus.

Risk-based approach for gatherings

Principles

- WHO recommends that the decision-making process related to holding, modifying, postponing or cancelling gatherings of any size and type should rely on a risk-based approach, tailored to the characteristics of the event under consideration and be repeated at regular intervals.
- The risk-based approach entails three steps:
 1. Risk evaluation: identification and quantification of the baseline risks based on the characteristics of the event and the context in which it takes place.
 2. Risk mitigation: application of a package of precautionary measures aimed at decreasing the baseline risk.
 3. Risk communication: proactive dissemination of information on the measures adopted, their rationale and purpose, and on how the relevant decisions were taken.
- In the context of the current outbreak, monkeypox-associated risks should be considered and factored in when planning a gathering event.
- Postponing or cancelling gatherings in areas where monkeypox cases have been detected is not required as a default measure.

Monkeypox-associated risks during the current outbreak

- In the context of the current monkeypox outbreak, cases have been primarily identified among some gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men including those who have reported recent sex with a new partner or multiple partners.
- Key transmission routes include skin-to-skin, mouth-to-mouth and mouth-to-skin contact during sexual activity. Transmission can also occur through skin-to-skin contact not related to sexual practices, face-to-face contact via respiratory droplets and from contaminated surfaces or materials; it is still unclear if infected people with no symptoms can transmit the monkeypox virus, making it important for anyone attending gatherings to exert additional care.

28 June 2022

Health authorities should be aware of the epidemiology of monkeypox in the host area.

- Gatherings should be used as opportunities for information outreach and for risk communication and community engagement (RICE) activities; these should also target individual behaviours associated with safe gatherings, unplanned congregation, and unstructured socialization in public or private spaces.
- Health authorities and event organizers should facilitate the adoption of appropriate public health and social measures, including those aimed at infection prevention and control, to decrease the risk of transmission of monkeypox virus in conjunction with the event.

Information specifically designed for communities of gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men is now available, including updated public health advice.

Gatherings attendees should always be reminded to apply individual-level responsibility to their decisions and actions, with the aim of preserving their health, that of the people they interact with, and ultimately that of their community.

WHO continues to monitor the current monkeypox closely for any changes that may affect the advice included in this document. Should any factors change, WHO will issue a further update.

© World Health Organization 2022. Some rights reserved. This work is available under the CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO licence. WHO reference number: WHO/MPX/Gatherings/2022.1



What you need to know

The event organizers should:

- Share information about monkeypox with prospective attendees and all those involved in the event.
- Advise that anyone showing signs and symptoms consistent with monkeypox symptoms should stay at home.



World Health Organization

MONKEYPOX: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

There is currently an outbreak of monkeypox in some countries that do not normally have cases:

- Most people recover fully without treatment, but in some cases, people can get seriously ill
- It is called 'monkeypox' because it was first found in monkeys
- While the risk to the general public is low, WHO is responding to this outbreak as a high priority
- What we know about the outbreak is changing fast – we are learning more every day

Symptoms of monkeypox include:

- Rash with blisters on face, hands, feet, body, eyes, mouth or genitals
- Fever
- Swollen lymph nodes
- Headaches
- Muscle and back aches
- Low energy



You can catch monkeypox through close contact with someone who has symptoms including:

- Skin-to-skin contact
- Face-to-face contact
- Mouth-to-skin contact
- Touching infected bedding, towels, clothing or objects



Protect yourself from monkeypox by avoiding close contact with someone who has symptoms:

- Avoid skin-to-skin, face-to-face and mouth-to-skin contact, including sexual contact
- Clean hands, objects, surfaces, bedding, towels and clothes regularly
- Wear a mask if you can't avoid close contact and when handling bedding, towels and clothes
- Ask people if they have symptoms before you have close contact
- Using condoms may not prevent monkeypox spreading during sexual contact, but can prevent other sexually transmitted infections

If you think you have monkeypox:

- Get advice from a health worker
- Isolate at home if possible
- Protect others by avoiding close contact with them
- Wear a mask and avoid touching if you need to have close contact

Stigmatising people because of a disease is NEVER ok.

Anyone can get or pass on monkeypox

24/05/2022

Individual protective measures to stay safe during gatherings

- **Keep yourself informed about monkeypox.**
- **Get local health advice** on monkeypox if attending any specific event that might be related with increased risk for monkeypox transmission
- **Refrain from close contact** with any other individuals and **avoid attending gatherings** if you present signs and symptoms consistent with monkeypox or you are awaiting test results.
- As skin-to-skin, mouth-to-mouth transmission during sexual activity has been frequently reported as a likely source of infection, **sexual contact should be avoided if you feel you may be infected with monkeypox**– even if you have not yet had a confirmatory test.
- If you think you have been exposed to monkeypox, **seek medical advice and isolate** from others until you have been tested.

Before the event

- Learn more about monkeypox and what to do to protect yourself.
- Don't trust everything you read/see online and only access reliable information from health authorities and international organizations.
- If you have any monkeypox symptoms – typically a rash – take a break from festivals and crowded events and contact your healthcare provider.

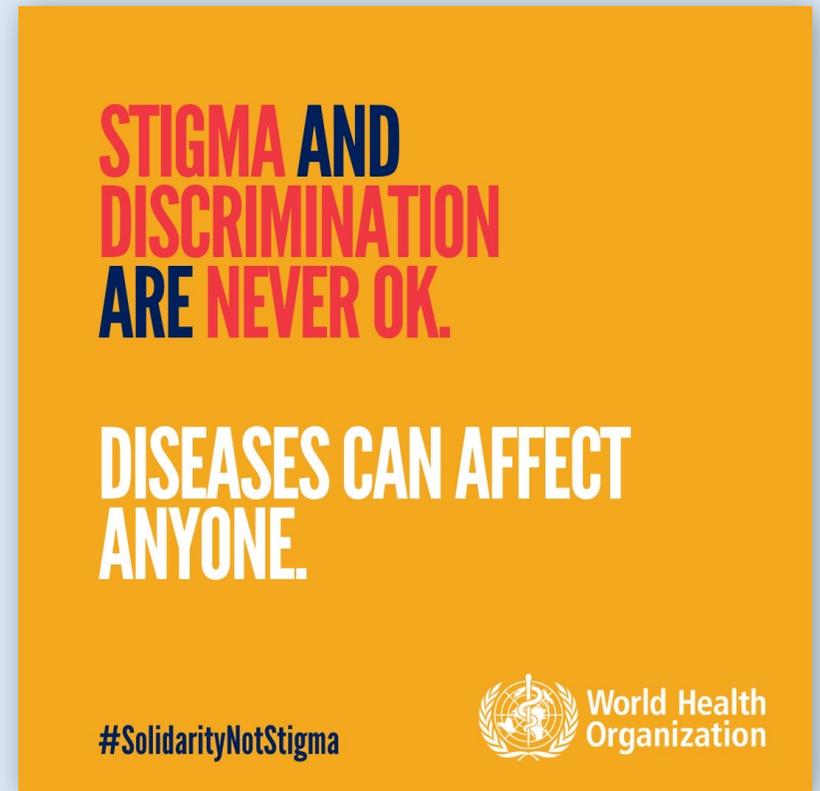


Updated 30 June 2022



General advice for the public

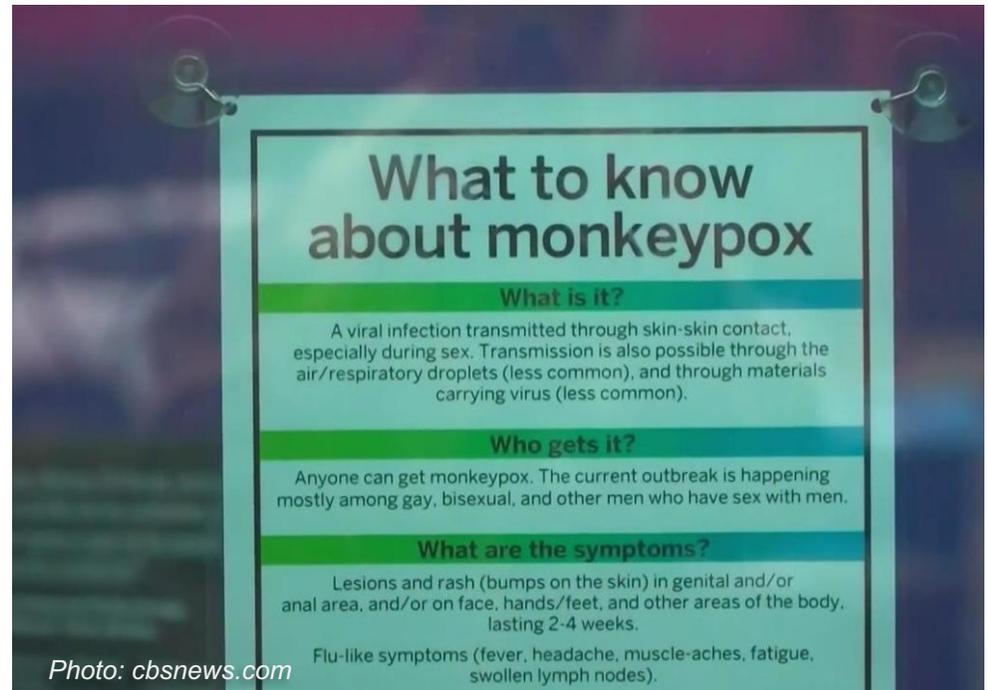
- Provide emotional and practical support to any friends or family members who may be asked to self-isolate.
- Contribute with combating misinformation by sharing only reliable, evidence-based and non-stigmatizing information from trustworthy sources.
- **Stigmatizing people because of the disease is never okay.**



We all have a common goal: stop the outbreak and suppress onward transmission

WHO encourages event organizers to:

- Raise awareness and avoid stigma
- Apply necessary PHSM according to the risk assessment results
- Protect people at risk and prevent transmission in all settings



Additional resources



EPI-WIN Webinar on Monkeypox outbreak and mass gatherings (recording and presentations)

<https://www.who.int/news-room/events/detail/2022/06/24/default-calendar/WHO-EPI-WIN-webinar-monkeypox-and-mass-gathering>



WHO EURO: Monkeypox outbreak: Resource toolkit for event organisers

<https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications-data/monkeypox-outbreak-resource-toolkit-event-organisers>



WHO Monkeypox outbreak toolbox

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/outbreak-toolkit/disease-outbreak-toolboxes/monkeypox-outbreak-toolbox>



WHO EURO, ECDC: Interim advice for public health authorities on summer events during the monkeypox outbreak in Europe, 2022

https://cdn.who.int/media/docs/librariesprovider2/country-sites/interim-advice-for-public-health-authorities-on-summer-events-during-the-monkeypox-outbreak-in-europe-2022.pdf?sfvrsn=230439fc_1&download=true



Monkeypox Q&A

<https://www.who.int/philippines/news/q-a-detail/monkeypox>



EPI•WIN

infodemic
MANAGEMENT