

Dear Campus Community,

As you probably know, the United States has been experiencing an outbreak of the Mpox (formerly monkeypox) virus. It is important that we are aware of how this virus spreads and how we might protect ourselves and one another from this illness. Awareness of this disease is key to containment. This illness can affect anyone.

**What is Mpox?** Mpox is a disease caused by infection with the Mpox virus. The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) is tracking multiple cases associated with a recent outbreak of monkeypox that has been reported in several countries, including the United States. The Tennessee State Health Department tracks cases of [Mpox](#) in Tennessee.

**How is Mpox spread?** Anyone can get Mpox, regardless of age or sex, though the virus does not spread easily. It can be spread through contact with objects, fabrics (clothing, bedding, or towels), and surfaces that have been used by someone with Mpox lesions. It can also be spread via respiratory secretions or oral fluids from a person with monkeypox during prolonged face-to-face contact or during intimate physical contact; however, it does not linger in the air and is not thought to be transmitted during short periods of shared air space. People who do not have Mpox symptoms cannot spread the virus to others.

**What are the symptoms of Mpox?** A rash or sores, sometimes located on hands, feet, chest, face, around the genitals, or inside the body including mouth, vagina, or anus. Other symptoms of Mpox can include fever, headache, muscle aches and backache, swollen lymph nodes, chills, and fatigue. Sometimes these symptoms occur before the onset of the characteristic rash or sores.

**What should I do if I think I have Mpox?**

- If you have a rash that looks like Mpox ([see here](#)), speak with a healthcare provider as soon as possible. Speak with your provider even if you have had no known contact with someone who has Mpox. Students can make an appointment at UHS by calling 931.598.1270 or by using your patient portal at [wellness.web.sewanee.edu](#). Employees should contact their personal healthcare provider.
- During your visit, your clinician will arrange for lab testing that can be performed only by swabbing the affected area. In other words, you must be symptomatic with a rash in order for a test to be performed and sent to a laboratory.

**Is there a vaccine for Mpox?** While there are effective vaccines for Mpox, CDC does not recommend widespread vaccination against Mpox at this time. However, vaccination may be recommended as post exposure prophylaxis (PEP) for people who have had contact with someone who has Mpox. See the full recommendations here [Vaccines | Mpox | Poxvirus | CDC](#)

**What should I do about class if I find I have Mpox?** For those who are infected, follow procedures directed by your healthcare provider. Students should not attend class; faculty will work with you to find ways to keep up on or make up work as they would for any situation that causes absence from class. Faculty who are diagnosed should teach remotely for the length of time recommended by their health care provider.

**Where can I learn more?** For more information about Mpox, please [visit the FAQ page](#) provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Students with questions or concerns are encouraged to call the University Health Service at 931.598.1270. Employees are encouraged to call their healthcare providers.

Thank you,

Karen Tharp, RN  
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The University Wellness Center