



# TAKE PRIDE IN YOUR SEXUAL HEALTH

## Prioritize your sexual health. Use safer sex practices. Get tested. Get vaccinated.

Vaccines and testing remain crucial tools for reducing risk of transmission and disease severity. Discuss your sexual health and any concerns with a healthcare provider so that you can get the appropriate testing and vaccines you need to remain healthy.

**PRIDE yourself in prioritizing your sexual health by getting tested regularly for STIs and getting vaccinated against mpox, if eligible.** Anyone can get mpox. It spreads mostly through close skin-to-skin contact. North Carolina continues to ensure equitable access to vaccines through partnerships with local health departments, primary care physicians, Federally Qualified Health Centers, community health workers, and other vaccine ambassadors.

**TAKE part in safer sex practices.** They can lower your risk of exposure to sexually transmitted infections (STIs) which are spread mostly by unprotected sexual contact. This includes anal, oral, vaginal, and some skin-to-skin contact.

- Talk to your partner openly about your sexual health
- Use barriers such as condoms and dental dams to prevent exposure to STIs.
- Spend time getting to know your partner(s) and their sexual health.
- Get tested! Get any unfamiliar rashes, lesions or sores checked by a healthcare professional so treatment can begin immediately.
- Talk with your partner about any mpox symptoms. [www.ncdhhs.gov/mpox](http://www.ncdhhs.gov/mpox)
- Talk to a healthcare provider about PrEP and vaccines that may be recommended for you.

Examples of mpox exposure by contact with someone who has the virus

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|---------------------------|---|
| <b>HIGHEST EXPOSURE:</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bare skin-to-skin contact with infectious rash, scabs or bodily fluids.</li> <li>• Sexual contact.</li> <li>• Other intimate skin-to-skin contact: such as kissing, massage or cuddling.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>SOME EXPOSURE:</b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crowds where people aren't wearing much clothing with a lot of skin-to-skin contact.</li> <li>• Sharing drinks, utensils, cigarettes, vapes, pipes, etc.</li> <li>• Sharing towels, bed linens, or other personal items.</li> <li>• Exposure to respiratory droplets through prolonged face-to-face contact with no mask use.</li> </ul> |
| <b>UNLIKELY EXPOSURE:</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crowds where people are mostly clothed, not much skin-to-skin contact.</li> <li>• Shaking hands with someone with no visible rash.</li> <li>• Shopping at the grocery store or mall.</li> <li>• Traveling by bus, train or plane or using public restrooms.</li> <li>• Trying on clothing at a store.</li> </ul>                         |

**NOW is the time to take the first steps!** If left untreated, sexually transmitted infections can lead to more health complications.

- There is no limit on testing. Talk to your doctor or local health department. [www.ncdhhs.gov/LHD](http://www.ncdhhs.gov/LHD)
- Vaccines, including the mpox vaccine, are sometimes available free of cost for people who may be at risk, regardless of immigration status.

**EVERYONE can do their part to control the spread of STIs. We are in this together.**



Search for free and confidential testing and vaccines for yourself, your partner, or your community. Scan for additional vaccine locations.

