

# Monkeypox Vaccine Fact Sheet

## Monkeypox

Monkeypox is a virus that causes fever, headache, swollen lymph nodes and tiredness, followed by a rash and blisters on the skin. It is usually spread by very close contact with someone who has monkeypox.

## Vaccine Overview

The Imvamune® vaccine:

- Is approved in Canada for protection against monkeypox.
- Is safe and effective.
- Can be used before getting exposed to the virus (pre-exposure prophylaxis - PrEP) or within 14 days after being exposed (post-exposure prophylaxis - PEP).
- Is injected into the fat layer on top of the muscle in the upper arm.
- Does not leave a scar like the older version of the smallpox vaccine.
- Teaches your immune system to recognize and fight the monkeypox virus.
- Takes two weeks after vaccination to give you protection.
- Contains modified virus and cannot make you sick.

The vaccine is free and available to eligible people. You do not need ID or OHIP.

## Vaccine Eligibility

Based on Ontario Ministry of Health guidelines, only one dose of the vaccine is given to eligible people at this time. The vaccine can be used as PrEP for transgender men and women or cisgender individuals who self-identify as belonging to the gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men (gbMSM) community AND at least one of the following:

- Had a sexually transmitted infection (STI) in the past 2 months, such as chlamydia, gonorrhea, or syphilis;
- Had a sexually transmitted infection (STI) in the past 2 months, such as chlamydia, gonorrhea, or syphilis;
- Had 2 or more sexual partners in the past 21 days or may be planning to;
- Attended a bathhouse, sex club or similar place for sexual contact within the past 21 or may be planning to, or who work/volunteer in these settings;
- Had anonymous/casual sex in the past 21 days or may be planning to, including using online dating or hookup apps;
- Engage in sex work or may be planning to, and their sexual contacts.

For the best protection, eligible people should get the vaccine before being exposed to monkeypox.

People who have a known exposure/close contact with someone with monkeypox should get the vaccine as PEP within 4 days, but can be given up to 14 days after the last exposure

Contact a healthcare provider or Toronto Public Health to find out if you are eligible for PrEP or PEP.

## Side effects and risks

Like other vaccines, this vaccine may cause some side effects. Most are mild to moderate, and go away on their own within 7 days. Common side effects include:

- Redness, pain or swelling at the injection site
- Feeling tired
- Headache
- Muscle aches
- Nausea

Contact a health care provider or go to the nearest emergency department if you have any of these symptoms after getting the vaccine:

- Hives
- Swelling of the face or mouth
- Trouble breathing or shortness of breath
- Chest pain or a pounding heart

## Speak to a Health Care Provider before getting vaccinated if you:

- Have allergies to any of the vaccine [ingredients](#) including: Tris/tromethamine, bromobutyl benzonase, chicken protein, egg, gentamicin and ciprofloxacin.
- Had any serious reaction to another type of smallpox/monkeypox vaccine.
- Are less than 18 years of age.
- Are pregnant or breastfeeding.
- Have a weak immune system (including organ transplant or HIV with low/unknown CD4 counts), as the vaccine may not be as effective in individuals with a weak immune system.

Wait to get vaccinated if you have any COVID-19 or monkeypox symptoms, and/or you are required to self-isolate. If you think you have monkeypox, it's important to isolate right away and contact a health care provider.

**For more information:** Talk to a healthcare provider or visit [toronto.ca/Monkeypox](https://toronto.ca/Monkeypox)