

MPOX Vaccine Fact Sheet

MPOX

MPOX (formerly known as monkeypox) is a virus that usually spreads by very close contact with someone who has the virus. Anyone can get MPOX, but at this time, it has mostly spread between people who had close intimate/sexual contact with a person who has the virus. On May 11, 2023, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared an end of MPOX as a global health emergency, but we are still seeing MPOX activity in Toronto, across Canada, and in other countries.

Vaccine Overview

The Imvamune[®] vaccine:

- Is approved in Canada for protection against MPOX.
- Is safe and effective. People who have been vaccinated have less severe symptoms, and studies have shown that 2 doses of Imvamune[®] reduces the risk of MPOX by 66-83%.
- Can be used before getting exposed to the virus (pre-exposure vaccination) or within 14 days after being exposed (post-exposure vaccination).
- Requires two doses*, given 28 days apart, for full protection. It's important to get both doses, as soon as possible, especially before travel.
- Takes two weeks after vaccination to give you protection.
- Anyone who received a dose of the smallpox vaccine in the past is recommended to get 1 dose of the Imvamune vaccine to 'boost' their protection.
- Contains modified virus and cannot make you sick.

*The second dose is a full dose exactly like the first

The vaccine is free and available to eligible people. No ID or OHIP required. [Appointments](#) and walk-ins are available at City-run clinics. You can book an appointment at tphbookings.ca. Visit toronto.ca/MPOX to find other clinic locations in the community.

Vaccine Eligibility

Based on Ontario Ministry of Health guidelines, two vaccine doses, given at least 28 days apart, are available to eligible groups. Two doses of the vaccine provides the best protection.

Eligible Groups:

1. For Pre-Exposure Vaccination:

- a) Two-Spirit, non-binary, transgender, cis-gender, intersex, or gender-queer individuals who self-identify or have sexual partners who self-identify as belonging to the gay, bisexual, pansexual and other men who have sex with men (gbMSM) community AND at least one of the following:
 - Had a confirmed sexually transmitted infection (STI) within the last year;
 - Have or are planning to have two or more sexual partners or are in a relationship where at least one of the partners may have other sexual partners;

- Have attended venues for sexual contact (e.g. bathhouses, sex clubs) recently or may be planning to, or who work/volunteer in these settings;
 - Have had anonymous sex (e.g. using hookup apps) or may be planning to; and/or
 - Are a sexual contact of an individual who engages in sex work.
- b) Individuals who self-identify as engaging in sex work or may be planning to, regardless of self-identified sex or gender.
- c) Research laboratory employees working directly with replicating orthopoxviruses.

Household and/or sexual contacts of people who are eligible for Pre-Exposure Vaccination listed above in parts (a) and (b) AND who are either moderately to severely immunocompromised (have a weak immune system) or are pregnant may be at risk for severe illness from a MPOX infection. These individuals may be considered for Pre-Exposure Vaccination, and should contact a healthcare provider or Toronto Public Health for more information.

2. For Post-Exposure Vaccination:

- People who are a close contact of someone with MPOX, or were exposed in a setting where MPOX is spreading, should contact Toronto Public Health to get assessed to see if the vaccine is recommended.
- When used as Post-Exposure Vaccination the vaccine should be given within four days, but can be given up to 14 days after the last exposure.
- People who got one dose as post-exposure vaccination can get a second dose at least 28 days later.
 - People who are under the age of 18 should consult a healthcare provider before getting their second dose.

For questions about your eligibility for vaccination, contact a healthcare provider or Toronto Public Health at 416-338-7600

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 seven 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 or hypersensitivities 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/MPOX vaccine.
- Are getting the Imvamune vaccine less than four weeks before or after another 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).

Wait to get vaccinated if you have any COVID-19 symptoms, and/or you are required to self-isolate.

If you think you have MPOX, it's important to isolate right away and contact a health care provider. At this time, people who have or have had MPOX are not eligible for the vaccine.

For more information: Talk to a healthcare provider or visit toronto.ca/MPOX