



NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE

Ashwin Vasani, MD, PhD
Commissioner

April 12, 2023

Dear Colleague,

The New York City (NYC) Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (Health Department) is asking for your help to prevent another [mpox \(monkeypox\) outbreak in NYC](#). Though only one case of mpox was reported in NYC in the last four weeks, the outbreak continues in other [US jurisdictions](#) and [globally](#). The outbreak has spread primarily through sex and other intimate contact among social networks of gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men, and Latino and Black New Yorkers have been disproportionately affected. The possibility of increased local transmission remains a concern, especially as summer approaches. Please review the below steps your practice can take to help prevent the spread of mpox in NYC and ensure people who become infected get the care they need.

We invite you to join us for a webinar on mpox updates for NYC on April 19 from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. The webinar will cover the latest information about mpox epidemiology, treatment, and vaccines and provide guidance for what you can do to help prevent another outbreak. **Register [here](#).**

Have JYNNEOS vaccine on hand and offer it as part of routine sexual health services. If your facility is not yet enrolled, start the mpox vaccination program enrollment process by emailing poxvax@health.nyc.gov. We urge facilities not yet enrolled in the JYNNEOS vaccination program to do so now.

The JYNNEOS vaccine is [highly effective](#) and strongly recommended for people at higher risk of mpox exposure. This includes men whose sex partners include any individuals other than cisgender women; people who have been diagnosed with a sexually transmitted infection (STI) in the last six months; and people living with HIV or taking HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP). Close contacts of people with mpox should promptly receive vaccination as post-exposure prophylaxis. Discuss vaccination with patients as part of broader discussions around sexual health and avoid making assumptions about patient risk. JYNNEOS vaccine should be provided to anyone who requests it and for whom it is not [contraindicated](#).

Mpox vaccine program updates make it easier for providers to offer vaccination. Features of the program include:

- Vaccine is provided by the federal government for free.
- Vaccine is now delivered frozen and can be stored in a regular freezer until expiration, allowing for extended storage times (often more than one year).
- Subcutaneous administration is now recommended for all patients.
- Vaccine comes in single dose vials and providers can place orders for as few as 20 vials.

Help ensure patients complete the two-dose JYNNEOS vaccination series. Protection is strongest among people who receive [two doses](#). Approximately 50,000 New Yorkers have received only one

dose. Providers can play a critical role in encouraging these individuals to complete their vaccination series. A second dose of JYNNEOS is safe and effective, regardless of the amount of time that has lapsed since the first dose.

Have a high index of suspicion when evaluating people with a characteristic rash, even if they have a history of vaccination, prior disease or no known risk factors. Prompt recognition of mpox infection is critical to prevent complications, ensure treatment, and identify contacts. Mpox infection in [people who are immunocompromised](#) can be particularly severe and lead to [death](#). Commercial testing for mpox is available at many laboratories. All sexually active patients with suspected or confirmed mpox should also be evaluated for HIV and other STIs.

Continue to report all mpox cases to the NYC Health Department. Cases can be reported electronically through [Reporting Central](#), by calling the Provider Access Line at 866-692-3641, or by faxing the [Universal Reporting Form](#) to 347-396-8997.

Encourage patients with mpox to inform their recent close contacts (intimate partners and others with possible direct contact with rash, sores, or saliva), if they are comfortable doing so. Also encourage patients to provide a list of close contacts to the NYC Health Department when contacted to help ensure people who are exposed receive post-exposure prophylaxis.

Assess patients for [treatment with tecovirimat \(TPOXX\)](#) and provide supportive care. Early [antiviral treatment](#) is especially important for people at increased risk for severe disease or complications, such as those who are immunocompromised due to HIV. Inform patients about the [Study of Tecovirimat for Human Mpox Virus \(STOMP\)](#) for their voluntary participation. Mpox can cause severe, often debilitating symptoms. Ensure patients get the pain management and other supportive care they need as symptoms evolve.

Normalize mpox care by integrating it into routine sexual health services and HIV care and services. The NYC Health Department will be launching a campaign to encourage people to take charge of their sexual health and seek sexual health services. Join us in promoting this message by ensuring patients have access to non-stigmatizing, culturally appropriate sexual health services, including mpox vaccination, testing, and care. Continue to offer eligible patients HIV PrEP and ensure patients with HIV are on an effective antiviral regimen. Parental consent is not needed for mpox, HIV, and other sexual health services.

If unable to offer mpox vaccination and care, refer patients to a provider who can. This includes the NYC Health Department's [Sexual Health Clinics](#) and NYC Health + Hospitals [ExpressCare](#). Patients can find vaccination sites at vaccinefinder.nyc.gov. Vaccine is free for all patients.

Thank you for continuing to promote and protect the health of New Yorkers.

Sincerely,



Celia Quinn, MD, MPH
Deputy Commissioner
Division of Disease Control
NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene