

# Mpox Vaccine Fact Sheet

## Mpox

Mpox (formerly known as 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 mpox.

## Vaccine Overview

The Imvamune® vaccine:

- Is approved in Canada for protection against mpox.
- Is safe and effective.
- Can be used before getting exposed to the virus (pre-exposure prophylaxis) or within 14 days after being exposed (post-exposure prophylaxis).
- Requires two doses\*, given 28 days apart, for full protection – it's important to get both doses, as two doses provides the best protection.
- Should be given to someone who got a smallpox vaccine in the past to ensure they are protected.
- 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 mpox virus.
- Takes two weeks after vaccination to give you protection.
- Contains modified virus and cannot make you sick.
- Can be given on the same day or at any time before or after other vaccines.

\*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 are needed for Toronto Public Health clinics.

## Vaccine Eligibility

Based on Ontario Ministry of Health guidelines, two vaccine doses, given at least 28 days apart, are available to the following eligible groups:

### 1. For Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP):

- 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 prophylaxis 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 an mpox infection. These individuals may be considered for PrEP, and should contact a healthcare provider or Toronto Public Health for more information.

## 2. For Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP):

- 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 PEP, 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 PEP should get a second dose at least 28 days later if mpox infection did not develop.
  - People who are under the age of 18 should consult a healthcare provider before getting their second dose.

If you already got a smallpox vaccine: If you are eligible to get Imvamune as pre- or post-exposure prophylaxis and already got a smallpox vaccine (an older generation replicating (live) smallpox vaccine) in the past, you should still get immunized for mpox as you may not be protected.

## 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 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 less than 18 years of age.
- Are pregnant or lactating.
- Have a weak immune system (from disease or treatment). Wait to get vaccinated if you have any flu-like symptoms or fever, 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](https://toronto.ca/mpox)

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