



Connie Beck, Director  
Social Services | Public Health | Behavioral Health

## news release

---

Aug. 12, 2022

### Public Health scheduled to start vaccinating people at high risk of monkeypox

People at high risk of monkeypox will have the opportunity to start getting vaccinated right away after the Humboldt County Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS) Public Health Branch received 100 doses of the Jynneos vaccine earlier this week.

Prior to this allotment, Public Health received 20 monkeypox vaccines earlier in the month, with a quarter of them earmarked for staff in Humboldt and Del Norte counties who will be in charge of vaccinating community members.

Due to the shortage of vaccines, on Tuesday the Federal Food and Drug Administration issued an emergency use authorization which allows health care providers to administer one-fifth of a dose of the Jynneos vaccine intradermally under the top layer of a person's skin rather than into the subcutaneous tissue, which is the deepest layer of the skin, as it has been done previously. In studies, using a smaller dose intradermally has been shown to give protection that is very close to what you get from a larger, subcutaneous dose. This decision effectively multiplies the county's allotment.

Humboldt County Health Officer Dr. Candy Stockton said this is great news. "With this new guidance, Humboldt County went from having just over 100 doses of monkeypox vaccine available to having more than 500. This means we can make the vaccine available to the members in our community who are at highest risk instead of waiting and responding only to outbreaks."

Dr. Stockton said Public Health is working with local health care providers to help identify patients who fall into the highest risk category and scheduling them to be vaccinated. Community members who fall into the highest risk category can also reach out to their providers to get a vaccine scheduled.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) identifies people who fall into the highest risk category as gay, bisexual and other men (including

cisgender and transgender men) who have sex with men or transgender women, who meet at least one of the following criteria:

- Have been diagnosed with a bacterial sexually transmitted disease (e.g., chlamydia, gonorrhea, syphilis) in the past three months, or
- Have engaged in chemsex (using specific drugs before or during sex) or group sex with other men in the past seven days, or
- Have had sex in the past seven days with anonymous male partners, or
- Have attended sex-on-premises venues (e.g., saunas, bathhouses, sex clubs) in the past seven days, or
- Have engaged in survival and/or transactional sex in the past three months.

Additionally, people among the above-mentioned groups who are living with HIV or other conditions that cause them to be immunocompromised should be prioritized for vaccination.

Currently, there has been one confirmed case of monkeypox in Humboldt County.

Monkeypox is a viral infection which is spread through close personal contact, including skin-to-skin contact, kissing and sex. Symptoms of monkeypox include:

- Fever
- Headache
- Muscle aches and backaches
- Swollen lymph nodes
- Chills
- Exhaustion
- Sore throat, nasal congestion or cough.

It may also include a rash located on or near the genitals or anus, as well as other areas such as the hands, feet, chest, face or mouth. The rash can look like pimples or blisters and may be painful or itchy. The rash will typically go through several stages including scabs before healing, according to the CDC.

Testing for monkeypox must be ordered by a health care provider and includes taking a sample from an existing lesion.

Monkeypox is a rare zoonotic infection caused by the monkeypox virus, which is in the same family as smallpox but less severe. The monkeypox virus is spread to humans from infected humans, animals and materials contaminated with the virus. The current outbreak has impacted mostly gay and bisexual men and men who have sex with men. Although the risk to the general U.S. population is low, the following tips can help keep you safe:

- Practice good hand hygiene

- Always talk to your intimate partner/s about recent illness, and be aware of new or unexplained sores or rashes on your body or your partner's body, including on the mouth, genitals, anus and hands
- Avoid intimate contact, including sex, with people who have symptoms like sores or rashes
- Avoid contact with infected animals and materials containing the virus
- Use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) like a mask, gown and gloves when caring for people with symptoms
- Infected people should isolate until their symptoms, including rash, have gone away completely.

In addition to the vaccines, Public Health has more than 400 doses of an antiviral medication which would be made available for people with severe complications.

Additionally, people at high risk for severe monkeypox who are immunocompromised, 8 years old or younger, pregnant or breastfeeding or have a history of skin disease may also be eligible for the medication.

While monkeypox is endemic to many Central and West African countries, there have been recent cases of monkeypox reported in non-endemic countries, including the U.S., Canada and the U.K., as well as other parts of Europe and Australia.

To date, there are more than 10,750 cases of monkeypox in the country, including nearly 1,900 cases in California. If you are experiencing symptoms, have been in contact with an individual who has tested positive for monkeypox or fall into the high-risk category, please contact your health care provider. If you do not have a provider, call Public Health at 707-445-6201.

###

Follow us on

Twitter: [twitter.com/HumCoDHHS](https://twitter.com/HumCoDHHS) and  
Facebook: [facebook.com/HumCoDHHS](https://facebook.com/HumCoDHHS)