

Governor Phil Murphy

Governor Murphy and New Jersey Health Commissioner Outline Expanded Monkeypox Vaccine Eligibility, Availability

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TRENTON – Governor Phil Murphy and New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) Commissioner Judith Persichilli today announced expanded eligibility for the monkeypox vaccine and the State's distribution plan for the 2,700 available doses. The vaccine was previously available to residents with known exposure to a monkeypox case. Going forward, the JYNNEOS vaccine will also be available to New Jerseyans who are at high risk of having been exposed to the virus in the past 14 days. There are currently 45 probable and confirmed cases of the virus in New Jersey.

"As cases of monkeypox continue to rise and our state receives additional doses from the federal government, we are taking these critical steps to increase availability of the vaccine to protect the health of residents," **said Governor Murphy**. "As my administration works to raise awareness about monkeypox, we encourage our health care and community partners to help spread the word about symptoms, risks, and availability of both testing and vaccines. We will continue to prioritize the health of our communities and take steps to assist and reach residents at highest risk for this virus."

"New Jersey has been given a very limited number of doses at this time, and the Department continues to press the CDC on timely delivery of additional necessary doses to meet the needs of our at-risk populations," **said Health Commissioner Persichilli**. "At the same time, residents should be aware of the signs and symptoms of the orthopoxvirus and take precautions to prevent the spread."

For residents with known exposure to a person with monkeypox, the two-dose regimen for Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) continues to be available through their local health department. Anyone with a known exposure within the past 14 days should contact their health care provider or local health department regarding testing and vaccine eligibility. Local health departments will continue to conduct contact tracing and offer the vaccine to anyone identified as a close contact.

For residents without a confirmed exposure who believe they may have been exposed or are at high risk for having been exposed to monkeypox in the past 14 days, the vaccine is now available through three community partners via appointments only.

New Jersey is expecting additional doses from the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and as the State gets additional supply, the Department will continue to expand access to the vaccine.

In addition to individuals who have had known exposure to someone with monkeypox, and in accordance with CDC guidelines, the vaccine is now available to:

- Individuals that attended an event where known monkeypox exposure occurred
- Individuals that identify as gay, bisexual, or men who have sex with men (MSM), and/or transgender, gender non-conforming, or non-binary and who have a history of multiple or anonymous sex partners within the past 14 days

Persons that have a condition that may increase their risk for severe disease if infected with monkeypox virus, such as a condition that weakens the immune system, or a history of atopic dermatitis or eczema, should be a high priority for vaccination if they have exposure risk as listed above.

For these residents, information on vaccine appointments through the expanded PEP program is available through the three community partners:

- Hyacinth AIDS Foundation/Project Living Out Loud!, Jersey City: 201-706-3480
- The Prevention Resource Network, a program of the Visiting Nurse Association of Central Jersey, Asbury Park: 732-502-5100
- North Jersey Community Research Initiative (NJCRI), Newark: 973-483-3444 (tel:973-483-3444), ext. 200

Monkeypox is a rare disease caused by infection with monkeypox virus – part of the orthopox family of viruses – that can affect anyone. The virus can cause flu-like symptoms, swollen lymph nodes, and a rash that often begins on the face and spreads to other parts of the body. Monkeypox does not spread easily to people without close contact. Although many of the current cases have been found in individuals who self-identify as men who have sex with men, monkeypox can spread from direct contact with any infected individual to any other individual. It can also be spread by touching clothing, bedding, towels or surfaces that have been exposed to someone with the virus.

People who think they may have been exposed to monkeypox or who have symptoms of monkeypox should consult with a health care provider immediately.

According to the CDC, there are several steps that can be taken to prevent getting monkeypox:

- Avoid close, skin-to-skin contact with people who have a rash that looks like monkeypox.
 - Do not touch the rash or scabs of a person with monkeypox.
 - Do not kiss, hug, cuddle, or have sex with someone with monkeypox.
 - Do not share eating utensils or cups with a person with monkeypox.
- Do not handle or touch the bedding, towels, or clothing of a person with monkeypox.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

If you are sick with monkeypox:

- Contact your health care provider
- Isolate at home (<https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/clinicians/infection-control-home.html>)
- If you have an active rash or other symptoms, stay in a separate room or area away from people or pets you live with, when possible.

For more information on monkeypox visit: <https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/topics/monkeypox.shtml> (<https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/topics/monkeypox.shtml>) or <https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/index.html> (<https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/index.html>). For a directory of New Jersey local health departments, visit: www.nj.gov/health/lh/documents/LocalHealthDirectory.pdf (<https://www.nj.gov/health/lh/documents/LocalHealthDirectory.pdf>).

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