



UK Health  
Security  
Agency



## Information about Monkeypox (MVA) vaccine supply

# Why do I have to wait for my vaccination against monkeypox

**A smallpox (MVA) vaccination is being offered to people who are most at risk to help protect them against monkeypox.**

As monkeypox is caused by a virus similar to smallpox, vaccines against smallpox are expected to prevent or reduce the severity of the monkeypox infection.

The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) has recommended using

the MVA vaccine more widely in those at risk to help also reduce spread of the infection.

There is a limited supply of the MVA vaccine so, initially, one dose is being offered to those at highest risk. As more vaccine supplies become available, more people will be offered the first dose of the vaccine. Additional supplies are expected soon and those next in line will be offered the vaccine as soon as it becomes available.

## Who is the smallpox (MVA) vaccine recommended for?

UKHSA currently recommends that MVA is offered to:

- ✔ healthcare workers who are caring for and who are due to start caring for a patient with confirmed monkeypox (2 doses are normally required). This includes some staff in sexual health clinics who are assessing any suspected cases
- ✔ gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men (GBMSM) at highest risk of exposure. Your doctor/nurse will advise vaccination for you if they consider you are at high risk – for example if you have multiple partners, participate in group sex or attend ‘sex on premises’ venues. Staff who work in such premises may also be eligible
- ✔ people who have already had close contact with a patient with confirmed monkeypox. Vaccination with a single dose of vaccine should be offered as soon as possible (ideally within 4 days of contact but sometimes maybe given up to 14 days)

Because of the limited supply, only one dose of vaccine will be offered now to as many eligible people as possible. It is important to come forward for your first dose as soon as you are invited. If the outbreak continues a second dose may be advised later by your doctor to those at on-going risk.

## I am not in the first round of vaccinations – do I need an MVA vaccine?

Although more people have been diagnosed with monkeypox recently, the number of people overall in the UK remains low and the risk of catching monkeypox is extremely low.

The infection is only transmitted easily by close and intimate contact, including skin to skin contact. Therefore the vaccine is only being offered to those people who are likely to have very close or frequent contact with cases. By offering vaccine to these individuals, it is hoped that spread of the infection will be curtailed, thus reducing the risk to the whole population.

The vaccine is not being offered to healthcare staff who work in non-specialist wards or clinics,

even those in frontline services and Accident and Emergency. These staff are at very low risk of exposure – and they should take additional precautions if they are asked to see any suspected cases.

The vaccine is also not being offered to GBMSM who have fewer partners who have much lower chance of coming into close contact with a case.

### **I am in one of the listed groups above, when will I get offered my vaccine?**

The smallpox (MVA) vaccines are not made to be routinely used in any country, so global supplies are limited.

The UK has secured a limited supply to cover this outbreak and the vaccine batches will become available as each batch is manufactured and supplied.

So every dose is needed to protect those at highest risk and to help curtail the outbreak.

Some sexual health services will be contacting those men that are likely to be at highest risk, for example those who have had a recent sexually transmitted infection, to come in first.

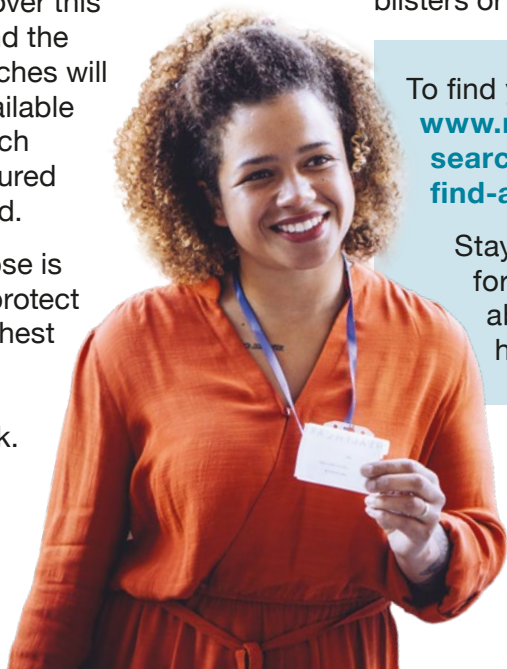
Other services will offer vaccine alongside other appointments, for example for HIV PrEP.

Once more vaccine supply becomes available, people outside of these initial groups will be considered.

In the meantime, gay and bisexual men should be aware of the risks of monkeypox and consider reducing the number of people they have close contact with, and avoid close contact with anyone who is unwell, has blisters or a rash.

To find your local clinic:  
[www.nhs.uk/service-search/sexual-health/find-a-sexual-health-clinic](http://www.nhs.uk/service-search/sexual-health/find-a-sexual-health-clinic)

Stay at home and call 111 for advice if you're not able to contact a sexual health clinic.



## Where can I get my MVA vaccination?

The MVA vaccine is being offered in some specialist sexual health clinics and for healthcare workers from their employer.

## What if the sexual health clinic I am offered is not easy to get to?

Please try to attend the sexual health clinic you are offered. If you cannot attend that clinic you may have to wait to get the vaccine in a more convenient location.

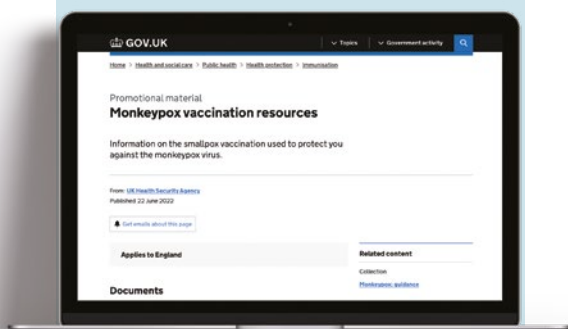
## Can I pay for an MVA vaccine privately or at a pharmacy?

No, the MVA vaccination is only available through the NHS to eligible groups and it is a free vaccination.

## Further information

You can read the smallpox MVA vaccination leaflet for the full vaccine information.

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/monkeypox-vaccination-resources](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/monkeypox-vaccination-resources)



You will get more information on the vaccine from the leaflet available on the European Medicines Agency website ([www.ema.europa.eu/en/medicines/human/EPAR/imvanex](http://www.ema.europa.eu/en/medicines/human/EPAR/imvanex)).

\* The vaccine you are being given is called Imvanex in the UK and Europe, Jynneos in the US and Imvamune in Canada. These all contain the same MVA vaccine and are made by the same company.