

**Will I be
offered the
vaccination**



**to help protect
against monkeypox?**

In Scotland, vaccination is being offered to people who are most at risk right now to help protect them against monkeypox.

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

The vaccine used in Scotland contains a virus that has been modified so that it cannot grow in the human body. This is called Modified Vaccinia Ankara (MVA) vaccine.

To read the information leaflet on vaccination to help protect against monkeypox visit: **NHS inform, [nhsinform.scot/MVA/vaccine](https://nhs.uk/inform/scot/MVA/vaccine)**

Who is the MVA vaccine recommended for?

The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) has recommended offering the vaccine to people who are at higher risk of coming into contact with monkeypox to help reduce the spread.

There is currently a limited supply of existing MVA vaccine and therefore it is being offered to those at highest risk first.

As more supplies become available, more people will be offered a first dose of the vaccine. Additional supplies are expected soon, and people will be offered a first dose in priority order as soon as it becomes available.

It is recommended the vaccine is offered:

- **Pre-exposure:** this includes those at highest risk but who have not yet had significant contact with someone with confirmed monkeypox. This includes gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men who are at higher risk including those who have multiple partners, participate in group sex or attend sex on premises venues. This also includes some healthcare workers in high risk settings where they may care for a patient with monkeypox.

A single dose of vaccine should be offered as soon as possible. A second dose may be offered at least 28 days after the first dose for those with an ongoing risk of monkeypox exposure.

- **Post-exposure:** this includes those who have had significant contact, including sexual contact and healthcare workers in high risk settings, with someone with confirmed monkeypox.

The vaccine is most effective when given within 4 days from the date of exposure to prevent the onset of the disease. However, it can be given up to 14 days after exposure for those at high risk of ongoing exposure and those at risk of more severe disease. This may reduce the symptoms of disease but may not prevent it. You will be offered one dose of the vaccine. You will be advised if you need any further doses.

A first dose of vaccine is being offered to as many eligible people as possible. It is important to come forward for your first dose as soon as it is offered to you.

Why have I not been offered the vaccine?

Monkeypox is a rare viral infection and the risk of catching monkeypox in Scotland is low.

You can catch monkeypox from close contact with a person with monkeypox. Therefore the vaccine is only being offered to those people who are likely to have very close or frequent contact with people who have monkeypox. By offering the vaccine to these individuals, it is hoped that this will help stop the spread of the virus.

The vaccine is not currently being offered to healthcare staff who work in non-specialist wards or clinics, including those in frontline services like 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 people with suspected monkeypox.

The vaccine is also not being offered to gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men unless they have sexual risks such as having multiple partners, participating in group sex or attending 'sex on premises' venues. Other GBMSM and most other LGBTQ and straight individuals will have a much lower chance of coming into close contact with a someone with monkeypox infection, so they will not be offered the vaccine unless their individual circumstances put them at particular risk. If you think your risk has changed at any time then contact your local sexual health service.

The vaccine is recommended for me – why do I still have to wait?

The MVA vaccines are not made to be routinely used in any country, so global supplies are limited. Scotland has secured a limited supply to cover this outbreak and the vaccine batches will become available as each is manufactured and supplied.

Every dose is needed to protect those at highest risk and to help stop the spread of infection.

The majority of Scotland's sexual health services will be contacting people at highest risk to offer vaccination. This may be done by phone or at that person's next appointment, for example for PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis) or Hepatitis B. Some areas may ask people to attend COVID-19 vaccination centres.

Once more vaccine supply becomes available, more people may be offered the vaccine. In the meantime you can help reduce your risk by being more careful about the number of contacts you have and avoiding contact with anyone who is unwell, has blisters or a rash.

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. Staff who work in other settings such as sex on premises venues where they are in contact with people with a higher risk of monkeypox may also be invited for vaccination.

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.

For more information you can:



visit **nhsinform.scot/MVAvaccine**



call **0800 22 44 88** (open 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday, and also provides an interpreting service)



textphone **18001 0800 22 44 88**.



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nhsinform.scot/MVAvaccine



0800 22 44 88



psh.otherformats@psh.scot

Information correct at time of publication.
Please visit **nhsinform.scot/MVAvaccine**
for the most up-to-date information.

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