

## **Monkeypox**

World Health Organization (WHO) recently declared monkeypox a Global Health Emergency and the U.S. has declared the virus a Public Health Emergency.

**ABOUT MONKEYPOX:** Monkeypox is a virus similar to smallpox, often presenting as fever, muscle aches, swollen lymph glands, chills, fatigue, and a rash, however, it can also be asymptomatic. The rash can present as reddish bumps (papules), blisters (vesicles), and pimples (pustules). A person may have a single lesion or have many lesions on their face, chest, back, arms, legs, abdomen, genitals, and mouth. A fever will usually occur 1–2 before the rash.

Most often, monkeypox is spread by direct contact with skin lesions, often through sexual relations. However, it can also be spread by respiratory droplets (presently felt to be a result of face-to-face interaction > three hours, less than six feet apart without PPE). There is some evidence that one can contract it from infected surfaces such as bedding and clothing.

In young, healthy people, the illness is usually self-limited and improves with time, rest, and symptom control (Tylenol, Benadryl, etc.).

A person is contagious until ALL skin lesions dry up and scale off the body. This typically takes 2–4 weeks. During this time, one needs to isolate.

**VACCINE:** There is presently a limited amount of the vaccine JYNNEOS in Connecticut. Several clinics and community health centers have access to this vaccine including [Middletown CHC](#). The vaccine is given in two doses, four weeks apart. You are considered fully vaccinated two weeks after receiving the second dose. Indications for the vaccine include:

- Post exposure: A person can get the vaccine up to 14 days after a known exposure to monkeypox. If the vaccine is administered within four days of exposure, there is a good chance that the disease may be prevented. After four days and up to 14 days, the disease severity may be decreased.
- High risk: Per the Connecticut Department of Public Health, the vaccine may be given if one meets ALL of the following criteria:
  - You met recent partner(s) through online applications or social media platforms (such as Grindr, Tinder, or Scruff) or at clubs, raves, sex parties, saunas or other larger gatherings.
  - Multiple or anonymous sexual partners in the past 14 days
  - Age 18 or older
  - A Connecticut resident (students can use their Wesleyan address)
- If you currently have monkeypox or have had monkeypox, you cannot receive the vaccine. If you have an allergy to any component of the vaccine—Gentamicin, Ciprofloxacin, or eggs—you may not receive the vaccine.

**LAB TEST:** Testing for monkeypox involves obtaining the fluid from a suspicious vesicle and sending it for testing to Quest Diagnostics. The sample can be obtained at the Davison Health Center. Anyone who feels they could have monkeypox should call the Health Center at 860.685.2470 to arrange an evaluation in an isolation exam room.

In most cases, monkeypox resolves on its own, however there are rare cases of severe illness, which require hospitalization. In these cases, there are medications that can be given in consultation with Infectious Disease and the DPH/CDC.

[The Connecticut DPH](#) has further information.

As more is learned about monkeypox, we will update our directions for testing, vaccinations, and treatments and will continue to keep the campus informed.

Revised 08/19/2022