



May 3, 2024

Dear Colleague,

The South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control is notifying providers of the recent increase in mpox (formerly monkeypox) infections in South Carolina.

Although anyone can get mpox through direct contact with the skin lesions, [most people report prolonged intimate contact like sexual activity as the mode of transmission](#). The virus that causes mpox continues to circulate in sexual networks of men who have sex with men. In 2024, most people infected with mpox in South Carolina were HIV infected. [Mpox infection in someone who is immunocompromised](#) can be fatal. Increased vaccination coverage is needed to protect those living with HIV against mpox.

The mpox vaccine (Jynneos) is an ACIP-recommended vaccine for [those at increased risk of mpox infection, including men who have sex with men](#). The vaccine is now available commercially, at selected [DHEC health departments, Ryan White clinical providers, and federally qualified health centers](#). Anyone who feels they have risk of mpox infection should complete the two-dose series of the vaccine. Additional doses are not recommended for those who have completed the series or had a natural infection. Someone who received one dose should complete the series as soon as possible.

Mpox is a [reportable disease](#) in South Carolina. Report any patient suspected to have mpox by phone to your regional epidemiology point of contact within 24 hours (see reportable disease link). Timely notification assists DHEC in providing post-exposure prophylaxis to exposed contacts and follow up with the person to prevent further spread. Early treatment with the antiviral medication tecovirimat (TPOXX) should be [considered for patients with low CD4 counts or disease in sensitive anatomic locations](#). To compile additional evidence around safety and efficacy, we encourage care providers of mpox patients to access TPOXX through the [NIH's STOMP clinical trial](#). For severe cases of mpox, including hospitalized patients, DHEC can assist treatment with a limited supply of TPOXX (oral and IV) and consultations with the CDC.

To learn more about mpox, visit the CDC webpage, "[Mpox: Information for Healthcare Professionals](#)."

It is critical to [educate and vaccinate](#) men with HIV who have experienced the highest burden of mpox cases. Education and vaccination prior to the upcoming LGBTQ+ Pride season may prevent mpox virus spread. DHEC is ready to assist in the prevention and control of mpox in South Carolina in conjunction with our clinical partners and broader community. Please contact mpxvax@dhecs.sc.gov with vaccine questions or supply issues, or contact tpoxx@dhec.sc.gov for treatment questions or TPOXX supply. We appreciate your vigilance in protecting the public's health.

Respectfully,

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