

Mpox in Manitoba: What You Need to Know

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What is Mpox?

Mpox (monkeypox) is a virus that can cause fever, muscle pains, and a rash that develops into blisters. Mpox generally goes away on its own, but symptoms can vary from severe to mild and can last several weeks or more.

Mpox seems to be most commonly spread through skin-to-skin contact during sex, including oral or anal sex and rimming. It can also be passed on during other types of close physical contact or exposure to contaminated surfaces or bedding. Contracting mpox involves

weeks of self-isolation in order to prevent the spread of the virus, and many people can experience intense pain while experiencing symptoms.

However, vaccinations are available to help prevent mpox. Receiving two doses of the mpox vaccine is currently the most effective way to protect yourself from the virus.

2S/GBTQ+ men are currently being prioritized with access to the vaccine.

For more information about eligibility for the mpox vaccine, the Manitoba provincial government has released the following fact sheet:

- <https://www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/factsheets/monkeypox-vaccine.pdf>

Sources:

- <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/mpox/risks.html>
- <https://www.mpox.ca>

Where can I access mpox vaccinations in Manitoba?

As of March 2023, there is only one confirmed case of mpox in Manitoba. Due to the small number of cases in the province, mpox vaccine availability is currently quite limited. Here are step-by-step instructions on how to access the vaccine in Manitoba as of March 2023:

- 1 | Manitobans interested in the mpox vaccine can call the community health centre nearest to their residence and ask them about getting vaccinated.
 - ▶ Here is a list of community health centres in the Winnipeg region:
 - <https://wrha.mb.ca/locations-services/community-health-offices/>

- 2** | When calling your local community health centre, you can dial 0 (zero) for general information from the different line options.
- 3** | You will then be connected with an operator who will ask what you are enquiring about. You can ask for more information about the mpox vaccine and how to schedule an appointment.
- 4** | Your call will then be transferred to the in-house nurse who will facilitate the booking of your mpox vaccination and order the vaccine into the community health centre of your choice.
- 5** | It will take approximately 5-6 business days for the vaccine to arrive at the community health centre you requested.
- 6** | Once the vaccine arrives at the community health centre, you will receive a call from the in-house nurse (or you can follow up after 6 business days have passed) to then schedule a time for you to visit the community health centre for your vaccination.

This is currently the only way for Manitobans to access the mpox vaccine. A resurgence of mpox cases in the future is possible and may begin resurfacing in your community with little to no notice. Community members are recommended to remain vigilant and stay connected with local community-based organizations such as Our Own Health Centre, the Klinik, and Sunshine House, as well as local public health offices for more information about mpox cases, vaccinations, and treatment.

Sources:

- <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/mpox/outbreak-update.html#a1>

How is mpox impacting the 2S/LGBTQIA+ community?

The majority of confirmed mpox cases across Canada have been reported among 2S/GBTQ+ men. While the virus can be transmitted to anyone regardless of identity or sexual orientation, one reason that this particular population has been impacted may be that 2S/GBTQ+ men often have larger sexual and social networks compared to people outside the community.

This may lead to instances of the virus being transmitted on a larger scale among 2S/GBTQ+ men and their sexual partners, particularly those with multiple sexual partners and/or individuals who are in non-monogamous relationships.

Sources:

- <https://mpox.ca>

Where do I learn more about Mpox?

You can learn more about mpox at mpox.ca, a resource created by Community-Based Research Centre (CBRC) to promote awareness of the virus to 2S/LGBTQIA+ people across Canada. The website includes information about the following:

- Answers to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) regarding mpox
- Resources focused on self-advocacy when accessing vaccinations or treatment and tips for proper wound care
- Lived experience testimonials from community members who have experienced mpox firsthand
- The latest news on mpox case numbers, access to vaccinations, and more

Additional Resources:

- <https://gmsh.ca/blog/2022/05/20/mpox/>
- <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/monkeypox>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/index.html>
- <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/monkeypox.html>
- <https://www.catie.ca/catie-news/an-outbreak-of-monkeypox-in-canada-and-other-countries>
- <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/m>

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