



## **ALERT FOR CLINICIANS**

### **Mpox outbreak in WA**

#### **KEY POINTS**

- Mpox cases in WA continue to occur with increasingly large numbers of anonymous contacts of mpox cases not able to be identified through contact tracing.
- Clinicians are advised to have a **low threshold to test for mpox and other sexually transmitted infections** in sexually active people with clinically compatible symptoms.
- **Men who have sex with men (MSM) are at highest risk of mpox.**
- Encourage **mpox vaccination** for eligible patients. Two doses provide optimal protection.

#### **Risk of mpox has increased in WA**

- Since 1 October 2024, 15 cases of mpox have been reported in WA – most acquired locally.
- A large number of anonymous sexual contacts of mpox cases have not been able to be identified through contact tracing. These exposures have occurred through anonymous sexual encounters via apps, sex parties or at sex-on-premises venues during November and December 2024.
- There is a risk of increasing transmission rates in the community if cases are not promptly detected.

#### **Test all people with symptoms who are sexually active**

- Mpox presentations vary and can include a rash (which can range from mild symptoms of one or two lesions only, through to disseminated lesions), proctitis without visible lesions, and/or urethritis.
- Prodromal symptoms (e.g. fever, lymphadenopathy, headache, myalgia, arthralgia) may occur.
- Test people with compatible symptoms, especially if they have any of the following risk factors:
  - contact with a known case of mpox
  - sex or intimate contact with men who have sex with men
  - casual or anonymous sexual encounters including at sex-on-premises venues, sex parties, sexual massage, or meeting new partners through dating or hook-up apps.

#### **Collect specimens safely and effectively**

- Wear personal protective equipment (mask, gloves, gown, eye protection).
- Collect swabs of lesions, a nasopharyngeal or throat swab and, if proctitis present, a rectal swab.
- Request "mpox PCR" and test for other STIs (syphilis, HSV, HIV, gonorrhoea and chlamydia).
- Use sterile dry viral swabs and double bag the specimens for transport.
- Advise the patient to stay at home (unless for essential activities) and limit contact with others while awaiting results. If the result is positive, public health will contact them with further advice.
- Refer to [mpox quick guide for clinicians](#) and [Mpox \(monkeypox\)](#) for further guidance.

#### **Free vaccination is available**

- Free JYNNEOS® vaccination is available for eligible people at risk. Two doses are recommended.
- See [Mpox \(monkeypox\) immunisation](#) for information about eligibility, availability and access.
- See the [Australian Immunisation Handbook](#) for further information about mpox vaccines.

#### **Notification**

- [Notify](#) suspected cases of mpox with clinically compatible illness **and** known risk factors to your local [Public Health Unit](#) (or 9328 0553 if after hours).

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