



NEWS ALERT

MONKEYPOX

27 MAY 2022



No confirmed cases of monkeypox in South Africa
Experts do not see the need for a vaccination campaign

HOT OFF THE PRESS:



According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), there are over 200 confirmed cases of Monkeypox around the world. While the monkeypox virus is usually seen in west and central Africa, recent infections have appeared in North America, Europe, the Middle East and Australia. There are no confirmed cases in South Africa.



Monkeypox is caused by the monkeypox virus, which belongs to the same family as the smallpox virus. It is usually transmitted from animals to humans. Unfortunately, once it is in the human population, it can be transmitted from person-to-person through infected body fluids or infected materials.



Monkeypox infection starts with flu-like symptoms and swollen lymph glands, before it develops its distinctive rash with blisters (much like chickenpox). It rarely develops into a serious illness, and has a low—around 3-6%—likelihood of resulting in death. Most people recover within 2-3 weeks of starting symptoms, without side-effects.



As with most viral infections, treatment is largely symptom-focused as the body recovers from the disease on its own. There are anti-viral treatments available for more severe cases. There is an 85% protection offered by the smallpox vaccine, and most South Africans over 40 will have had that vaccine as children, so will retain some level of protection.



The WHO has also issued a warning about the misinformation about monkeypox that is already circulating online, particularly that the monkeypox outbreak is linked to COVID-19 vaccines. This is 100% FALSE. There is no link between COVID vaccines and monkeypox. Work on coronavirus vaccines began in 1984; with COVID-19 only discovered in 2019. The monkeypox virus was first discovered in 1958, predating work on COVID vaccines by many decades.

Nor do the COVID vaccines affect your immunity, making you more vulnerable to monkeypox. The creation and rollout of COVID-19 vaccines has helped to limit the spread of coronavirus and saved hundreds of thousands of lives. It is important to halt the spread of this misinformation so that uptake of life-saving vaccines continues.



Our National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD) is not concerned about our ability to control the spread of monkeypox should it appear in South Africa. Our standard containment protocols for disease outbreaks should be sufficient to halt transmission. However, along with the Department of Health, they will continue to monitor and assess our local risk for the disease.

For more information, visit www.nicd.ac.za/monkeypox/

If you are 12 years or older, register and get vaccinated:

vaccine.enroll.gov.za

WhatsApp REGISTER to: 0600 123 456

Free SMS: *134*832#

Call 0860 142 142 weekdays 8AM—8PM

In person at a vaccination site



Protect yourself and your loved ones from COVID-19 with the two Vs:



Vaccination



Ventilation

CareWorks Contact Centre: 0800 24 36 72

Weekdays: 8AM to 5PM and Weekends: 8AM to 1PM

WhatsApp: 082 735 4472