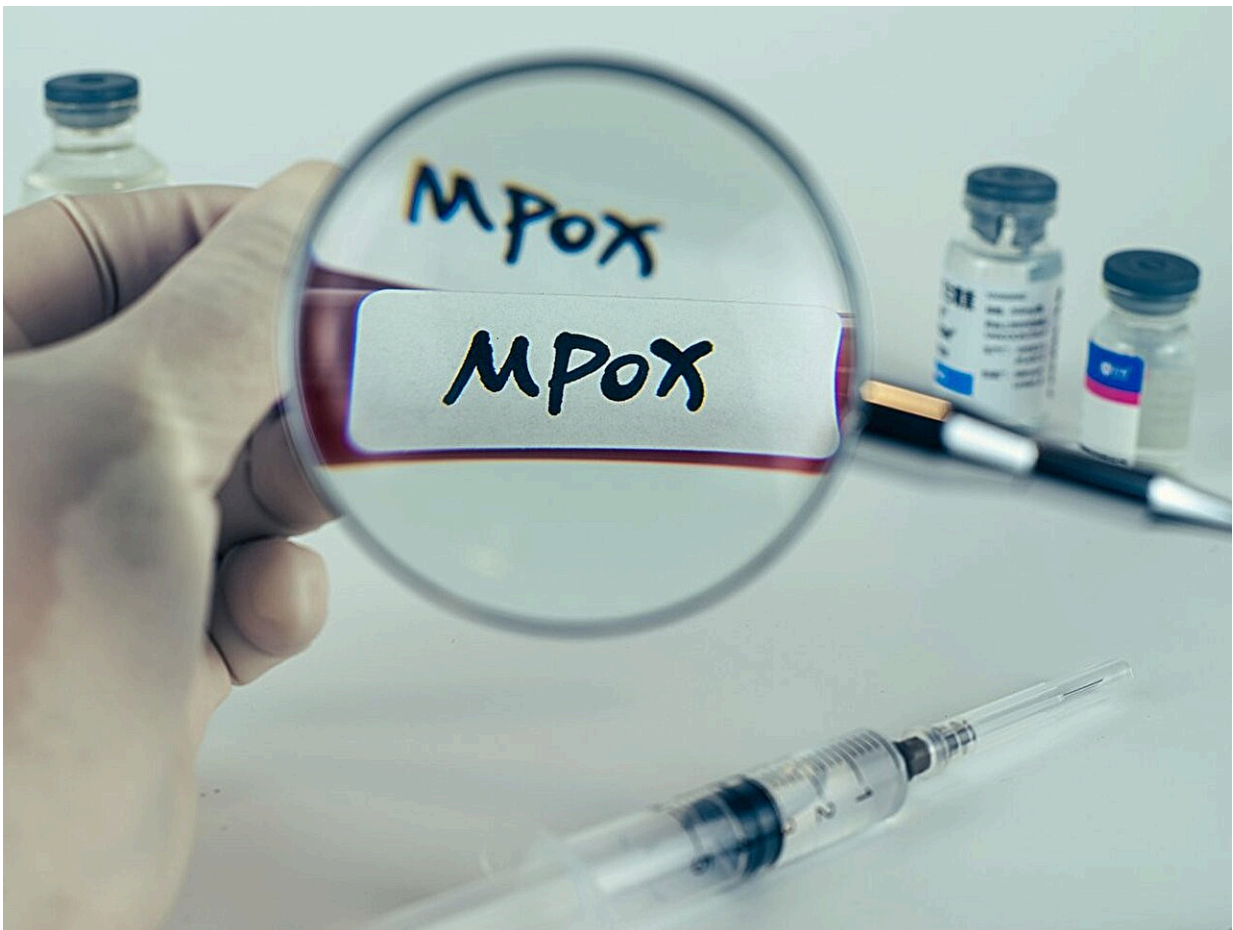


Mpox is still circulating among U.S. gay men, report warns

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Though not at numbers seen in the 2022 outbreak, [mpox](#) cases are still circulating in the United States, largely among gay and bisexual men, new government data shows.

According to the [U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), the [outbreak](#) of mpox (formerly known as monkeypox) viral illness in the United States during 2022 sickened more than 32,000 people and killed 58. The outbreak ebbed after education campaigns and vaccinations among high-risk groups were initiated.

However, mpox remains a global threat, with [a major outbreak](#) unfolding in central Africa.

And now a new report finds sporadic U.S. cases of mpox are still occurring among men who have sex with men. The [study was published](#) June 6 in the CDC journal *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*.

The study involved 196 people treated at 13 U.S. hospital emergency departments between June and December of 2023. The patients were selected because they showed up with rashes that were compatible with the rash seen with mpox disease. Forty-five percent were female and 20% were children.

Of the total cohort, only three people (1.5%) turned out to have mpox. All three were gay or bisexual men who hadn't been vaccinated for mpox and said they'd had multiple [sexual partners](#) they'd met via dating apps.

Mpox is spread through close personal contact. This typically involves skin-to-[skin contact](#), so sex can often be a means of transmission. Initial symptoms include fever, chills, exhaustion, headache and [muscle weakness](#), often followed by a rash with lesions that scab over and slowly

heal over a period of weeks.

Although anyone can get mpox, men who have sex with men are particularly at risk, and those who have HIV are more vulnerable to [severe disease](#).

Luckily, there is an mpox vaccine, manufactured under the brand name [Jynneos](#). It's a two-dose regimen, with shots given about a month apart.

Study co-leader Dr. David Talan, a professor of emergency medicine/[infectious diseases](#) at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA, said keeping track of mpox is crucial.

"Clinicians should remain vigilant for mpox infections, particularly in gay and [bisexual men](#) who have sex with men, and educate patients on risk reduction, including the importance of vaccination," Berdahl said.

More information: Find out more about mpox risks and prevention at the [World Health Organization](#).

Carl T. Berdahl et al, Mpox Surveillance Based on Rash Characteristics — 13 Emergency Departments, United States, June–December 2023, *MMWR. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* (2024). [DOI: 10.15585/mmwr.mm7322a1](#)

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