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County health officials providing Monkeypox vaccine to some local health care providers in Coachella Valley

Riverside County health officials are providing some community health partners with a portion of its Monkeypox vaccine allotment so local clinics can provide the two-shot vaccine series to patients.

The move is part of Riverside University Health System-Public Health's evolving response to the growing Monkeypox outbreak. Riverside County currently has a total of five confirmed/probable cases – all of which are in Eastern Riverside County.

“As we have seen during the COVID-19 pandemic, our community-based partners are a great resource that have always looked out for the best interest of residents,” said Kim Saruwatari, director of Public Health. “By sharing the vaccine, which is in limited supply, we wanted to make it as easy as possible for patients to get the shot if they and their medical provider agree it is appropriate.”

Monkeypox spreads primarily through direct contact with infectious sores, scabs, or body fluids, including during sex, as well as activities like kissing, hugging, massaging, and cuddling. Monkeypox can spread through touching materials used by a person with monkeypox that haven't been cleaned, such as clothing and bedding. It can also spread by respiratory secretions during prolonged, close, face-to-face contact.

Vaccination helps to protect against monkeypox when given before or shortly after

an exposure. At this time, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) has allocated a limited number of JYNNEOS vaccine doses to Riverside County. JYNNEOS is licensed for adults 18 years and over. It is administered as a two dose injection series in the upper arm at least four weeks apart.

Public Health will continue to maintain a supply of the Monkeypox vaccine that could be used in the event of a large-scale exposure event. Riverside County will also continue to provide the vaccine to people who have been in close contact with someone who has had monkeypox who are identified by public health via case investigation, contact tracing, and risk exposure assessments.

Riverside County is also collaborating with community partners to start providing the vaccine to individuals with certain risk factors who are more likely to have been recently exposed to monkeypox, as well as those in occupational risk of monkeypox. This can include laboratory workers who perform monkeypox testing, and clinical workers who regularly collect monkeypox specimens.

Riverside County is also working with community partners to set up treatment sites with Tecovirimat (TPOXX) for patients who are at higher risk of severe disease from monkeypox. At this time, most patients have not required TPOXX and symptoms have resolved on their own with symptom management strategies.

Riverside County is also encouraging community partners to utilize the available commercial laboratories that recently have started monkeypox testing, which will allow for quicker testing turnaround.

There are number of ways to prevent the spread of monkeypox, including:

- Always talking to your sexual partner/s about any recent illness and being aware of new or unexplained sores or rashes on your body or your partner's body, including on the genitals and anus
- Avoiding close contact, including sex, with people with symptoms like sores or rashes
- Practicing good hand hygiene
- People who become infected should isolate until their symptoms are improving or have gone away completely. Rash should always be well covered until completely healed.

- Using appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) (like a mask, gown, and gloves) when caring for others with symptoms
- Avoiding contact with infected materials contaminated with the virus
- Avoiding contact with infected animals