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Dept. of Health Makes Monkeypox Vaccine Available to At-Risk Populations

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Monkeypox vaccine JYNNEOS was approved in 2019 for prevention of smallpox and monkeypox disease in adults 18 years of age and older determined to be at high risk for smallpox or monkeypox infection

The V.I. Department of Health said Monday night that it has started making available monkeypox vaccines by appointment only throughout the territory to at-risk populations.

To date, no monkeypox cases have been confirmed in the USVI, but D.O.H. has sent a total of ten samples for testing, with eight returning negative and two pending, local health officials said Monday.

D.O.H. categorized the following as at-risk for monkeypox:

- Persons who have been in intimate/close contact with someone who is confirmed to have monkeypox within 2 weeks.

Persons who are more likely to be exposed to Monkeypox and who meet the following criteria for vaccination for Monkeypox prevention:

- Laboratory workers
- Emergency room clinical staff
- Public health and urgent care clinical staff
- Emergency first responders
- Severely immunocompromised
- Men who have sex with men
- Anyone with 2 or more sexual partners in the past 3 months
- Anyone using street drugs during sex
- Anyone who has had syphilis, gonorrhea, chlamydia, trichomonas, or any other acute sexually transmitted infection in the past 3 months
- Anyone incarcerated in the past 3 months
- Anyone who has attended a sex party or visited a group sex site in the past 3 months
- Sex workers

The health department said anyone who is eligible and interested in receiving the vaccine can call the Communicable Diseases Division Clinic for eligibility confirmation and scheduling of vaccination through the DOH Clinics. Contact number for both districts: 340-774-9000, extension 4663.