

COVID Update

- Surveillance report that was put out 8/3/2022 shows Vermont as a state is at low levels
 - Bennington county is a little higher than other counties
- Cases have been decreasing
- Slight uptick in hospital/ICU
- We'll round out July, with 10 deaths (which is considerably low)
- Wastewater data isn't consistent, but nothing alarming
- Numbers of outbreaks are less than a dozen
- State health officials met with the CDC, and they have a modeling team that was feeling confident that the country was at or approaching BA.5 (Northeast has passed the peak)
- VT has changed the definition on "up to date" for your vaccines – you have gotten every dose you are eligible for
- We'll be coming out with school memorandum very soon
 - The goal is to keep kids in in-person learning
 - The major issues will be some element of autonomy for school nurses, with regard to whether a child should go home from school
 - We will have abundant test kits available, but a test isn't necessary every time someone develops a sniffle
 - This will be shared with schools and as a press release

Monkeypox

- Monkeypox is now a public health emergency
- We continue to accumulate cases in the U.S. (still in the thousands)
- In VT we have 1 case
- We have a little over 200 dosages of the vaccine, maybe by the end of August we will have 400 dosages
 - Disseminating this vaccine to where the population at risk will be getting their care (comprehensive care clinics, planned parenthoods, etc.)
 - Canada is at a point where you can get a vaccine (seems like it's no questions asked)
- Ideal would be to have a major prophylaxis campaign
- 50% of the cases are from NY (New York City), CA (San Francisco), and Illinois
- We don't anticipate tons more cases in VT, but we have to see how this epidemic continues to spread
- Fear of the country is that pregnant women and children will contract it, because they are more at risk and that it will get into the small rodent population

Questions and Answers

How do health centers feel about being a location for the monkeypox vaccine?

Health centers are interested in giving the vaccine. But the VDH isn't hearing a need for the vaccine.

Any protection from smallpox vaccines that older populations received in the past?

Yes, but with the caveat that there can be waning immunity. There have been cases in which people have gotten monkeypox and previously received the smallpox vaccine.

Is there any information to share about the national shortage of lidocaine with epinephrine? Who is the best contact to reach out to about this?

This has been on our radar screen. Will find out who the contact is.

I understand there aren't culture kits for monkey pox (I think I read that). - how do we culture and do we have them in the office. i.e. let the patient in the office.

Very specific protocol for obtaining the samples. The office should talk to the VT epidemiology people about collecting the sample correctly. State public health labs are doing it across the country and there are 5 commercial ones now. Mayo may have their own specific requirements. Vermont clinicians who suspect HMPXV should call the Infectious Disease Program at (802) 863-7240, Option 2 to speak with an epidemiologist 24/7. <https://www.healthvermont.gov/disease-control/zoonotic-diseases/human-monkeypox-virus-hmpxv#MPXClinicians> <https://www.healthvermont.gov/disease-control/zoonotic-diseases/human-monkeypox-virus-hmpxv> and <https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/LSID-ID-Monkeypox-Partner-Toolkit-FINAL.pdf>

Older folks and people are asking about their booster now, but aren't sure if they should wait for something possibly new in the fall.

New vaccine will potentially be available in late September/early October. If you consider yourself at risk and may not be as safe as you were in other parts of the pandemic, I recommend for people to get their booster.

What would the minimum time between boosters?

4 months if you are in the general population.

Any discussion on the modified boosters, that would come to play in the pediatric arena?

We have to wait for the FDA to give us guidance on that. I think it'll be like getting a new primary series. Part of the vaccine will be part of the "ancestral series" and the new series will protect against BA.5.