

Bavarian Nordic vaccine approved for monkeypox prevention in US, Canada

26 July 2022, 5:21 PM |

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Image: Reuters A nurse holds a monkeypox vaccination at the Northwell Health Immediate Care Center at Fire Island-Cherry Grove, in New York, U.S., July 15, 2022.

A vaccine by Danish biotech company Bavarian Nordic has been approved for the prevention of monkeypox in the United States and Canada.

This follows the announcement by the World Health Organisation that the ongoing [monkeypox outbreak has been declared a 'Public Health Emergency of International Concern'](#).

This is the highest alarm the organisation can sound.

The European Commission approved Bavarian Nordic's Imvanex vaccine, which has been known to protect against smallpox.

Principal Medical Scientist at the Institute for Communicable Diseases in South Africa, Dr Jacqueline Weyer, says infections remain low in South Africa due to the previous rollout of the smallpox vaccine.

“There are now very real requirements globally for countries to contribute to containment efforts. This is a good move. It brings about a coordinated response in trying to bring the outbreak under control. We remain at risk as long as cases are being reported globally. Definitely, the smallpox vaccines provide cross immunity against monkey infection. It's because these viruses are very closely related. There are a number of vaccines available globally.”

WHO declares monkeypox a global health emergency:

<https://youtu.be/QKY6WL-Csz4>

South Africans reminded not to panic

Meanwhile, renowned epidemiologist, Professor Salim Abdool Karim says the declaration of the outbreak as a global health emergency was necessary as internationally coordinated response is necessary.

Over 16 000 cases have been reported in 75 countries and there have been five monkeypox-related deaths – all of which were in Africa. Three infections have been reported in South Africa so far.

Karim has reminded the public not to panic.

“Those who have indicated they have it, we don’t need to be that concerned, but on the flip side, there are over 70 countries that have never had monkeypox before where monkeypox is being reported and there is local spread. That is deeply concerning. So, even though there are only five deaths reported, it is not a disease that we need to be panicked about, but it is a disease that needs some kind of internationally coordinated response,” says Karim.

And while the National Health Department says it’s worried about the prevalence of monkeypox in the country, it is confident that there’s no need for alarm, as it says everything is under control.

More details in the report below:

<https://youtu.be/KkGr8jh4MGs>