

QuickCheck: Is the chickenpox vaccine also effective for monkeypox?

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[TRUE OR NOT](#)

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There have been several claims made that the chickenpox vaccine provides protection against monkeypox.

Is this true?

Verdict:



FALSE

There is no evidence that a chickenpox vaccine will protect you against monkeypox.

The two diseases are caused by unrelated viruses – the orthopox virus for monkeypox and the varicella-zoster for chickenpox – so the likelihood of a vaccine for one disease giving you protection for the other is very low.

As a side note, the monkeypox virus is closely related to the variola virus which causes smallpox, whereas chickenpox virus is related to the herpes simplex virus.

However, all is not lost as the World Health Organisation on their website has stated that several observational studies have shown the smallpox vaccine to be 85% effective against monkeypox.

The American Centre for Disease Control and Prevention in fact advises travellers to use the smallpox vaccine to protect themselves until a vaccine for the orthopox virus is released to the public.

Malaysian Medical Association president also agrees that the chickenpox vaccine is not an effective preventative measure against monkeypox.

"I am not aware of any evidence that shows that the chickenpox vaccine will confer protection against monkeypox," he said in a statement.

"But there is evidence to show that smallpox vaccine confers a degree of protection. This vaccine is hard to come by as smallpox has been declared as being eradicated."

References:

1. <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/monkeypox>
2. <https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/clinicians/smallpox-vaccine.html>