

Why the US is ill prepared if monkeypox escalates into a pandemic

As if dealing with continued waves of Covid-19 isn't enough, the U.S. is facing a new outbreak — monkeypox — that highlights just how close the U.S. public health system is to its breaking point.

While monkeypox has not *technically* been categorized as a sexually transmitted infection (STI), it looks and acts like common STIs and shares the same barriers to detection and treatment, including stigma and access to knowledgeable providers.

For people like me who are working inside the broad national response to monkeypox, there are loud echoes of the earliest days of Covid-19 and, longer ago, of AIDS. But understanding the country's capacity to contain monkeypox requires an examination of the STI epidemic that the nation has ignored for years, which is why these diseases continue to be out of control.

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The U.S. is at a crossroads regarding sexually transmitted infections. It can mount an effective monkeypox response and provide communities across the country with the infrastructure needed to promote health care for everyone. Or it can continue to play catchup in crisis after crisis and let common infections continue to rage in between.

[**This is an excerpt. Read the original post here**](#)