



HEALTH ALERT

Key Messages

- **Monkeypox cases have recently been identified in non-endemic countries including U.S., UK, Europe, and Canada. ([See CDC Travel Notice](#))**
- **As of June 1, the U.S. has had at least 19 cases including 3 related cases in Sacramento.**
- **Many recent cases have had an atypical presentation with lesions in the genital or perianal region, in the absence of prodromal symptoms.**
- **Consider monkeypox in your differential when the following are present:**
 - **Deep-seated, firm, well-circumscribed lesions – see “clinical evaluation” below**
 - **Travel to Western or Central Africa or travel to countries with new cases identified in the past 21 days**
 - **Contact with someone who has a similar rash or with a confirmed or suspected case of monkeypox**
- **Recent cases have disproportionately affected men who have sex with men**
- **Patients with suspected monkeypox should be masked and placed in a single room with droplet and contact precautions. Note: N95 or higher is required.**
- **If suspected monkeypox case, providers must consult their local public health department at (707) 268-2182 for consultation and testing approval.**

Dear Humboldt County Providers,

June 3, 2022

The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and Center for Disease Control (CDC) released health alerts in response to recent cases of monkeypox in non-endemic countries including the United States Canada, UK as well as other parts of Europe and Australia. As of June 1, 2022, there have been at least 19 cases in multiple U.S. states including 3 cases in Sacramento, California.

Monkeypox is a rare zoonotic infection caused by the monkeypox virus which belongs to the Orthopoxvirus genus (including smallpox). Monkeypox, less severe than smallpox, is endemic to many Central and West African countries (particularly Nigeria) and is spread to humans from infected humans, animals and materials contaminated with the virus.

Historically, monkeypox cases in the United States have occurred due to international travel and importation of animals. In 2021 the U.S had two travel-associated cases and in 2003, there was an outbreak of cases associated with imported small mammals.

Transmission:

- Incubation period ranges from 5 to 21 days, with an average of 7 to 14 days.



- Human to human transmission occurs through large respiratory droplets, direct contact with body fluids or lesion material, or contact with fomites (clothing, bedding, etc.)
- Animal to human transmission may occur through a bite or scratch or preparation of wild game and direct and indirect contact with body fluids or lesion material.
- Infectious period is from onset of symptoms until lesions have crusted, scabs have healed, and fresh skin has formed underneath.

Clinical Evaluation

- Classical presentation of monkeypox disease includes a flu-like illness (fever, chills, lymphadenopathy, malaise, headache, and muscle aches) for 1-3 days, followed by a characteristic rash with deep-seated, well circumscribed lesions, often with center umbilication progressing through sequential stages from macules, papules, vesicles, pustules, and scabs. Lesions usually occur on the face, arms, legs, palms, and soles.
- In many of the recent cases, prodromal symptoms have not always occurred, and lesions were often identified in the genital and perianal region. Cases have involved men who have sex with men (MSM) who may not have had a history of travel to an endemic country. Because of this atypical presentation, symptoms of monkeypox may be mistaken for other infections including syphilis and herpes simplex virus, varicella-zoster virus and others. Consider these other infections and perform testing as appropriate.
- A suggestive history may include:
 - recent travel to Central or West African countries or other areas reporting monkeypox cases.
 - Contact with a person or persons with similar appearing rash or who have received a confirmed or probable diagnosis of monkeypox.
 - Male who regularly has intimate in-person contact with other men.
- Note: genital lesions and rash can mimic other more common infections such as herpes, syphilis, varicella zoster). Consider these other infections and perform testing as appropriate.

Testing:

- **If clinical evaluation reveals monkeypox is high on the differential, consult with the Humboldt County communicable disease program (707) 268-2182 for testing approval.**
- **Testing can only be performed on swabs of lesions and 2 swabs are required for testing.**
- **Once testing is approved, please call the Humboldt County Public Health Lab at (707) 268-2179 for additional specimen collection and handling guidance.**
- Initial testing is done at specialized laboratories using an orthopoxvirus PCR.
- If initial testing is positive, additional specimens are required for confirmatory testing which is done through CDC using a specific monkeypox virus test.

Treatment:

- No proven treatment.
- Antivirals and smallpox vaccine can be used to reduce symptoms and for post-exposure prophylaxis. These treatments are available after case-by case evaluation. Call the



communicable disease program at (707) 268-2182.

Infection Control Precautions for Suspected Monkeypox:

- Patients with suspected monkeypox should be placed in a single person exam room with door closed or an airborne infection isolation.
- Patient should remain masked with a respirator or surgical mask as tolerated.
- The healthcare provider evaluating the patient should wear the following PPE:
 - Gloves
 - Gown
 - Eye protection (goggles or face shield)
 - N95 or equivalent
- PPE should be donned before entering the room and worn during all patient contact. PPE should be removed (gown, eye protection and gloves) and hand hygiene performed prior to leaving room. N95 should be discarded and replaced with a clean mask for source control after leaving room.
- Any EPA-registered hospital grade disinfectant should be used for cleaning and disinfecting environmental surfaces.

Please contact Humboldt County Public Health Communicable Disease Program at as soon as possible at (707) 268-2182 if you suspect a patient may have monkeypox. Feel free to contact us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Don Baird, MD, Health Officer
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Resources:

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Health-Advisory-Monkeypox-Virus-5-27-22.aspx>

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Health-Advisory-Monkeypox-Virus.aspx>

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/OPA/Pages/NR22-090.aspx>

[Webinar May 24, 2022 - What Clinicians Need to Know about Monkeypox in the United States and Other Countries \(cdc.gov\)](#)

<https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/response/2022/index.html>

