



ADVISORY: Monkeypox cases diagnosed in Europe, one identified in Massachusetts

DATE:	5/19/2022
TO:	Health Alert Network
FROM:	Denise A. Johnson, M.D., FACOG, FACHE, Acting Secretary of Health
SUBJECT:	Monkeypox cases diagnosed in Europe, one identified in Massachusetts
DISTRIBUTION:	Statewide
LOCATION:	n/a
STREET ADDRESS:	n/a
COUNTY:	n/a
MUNICIPALITY:	n/a
ZIP CODE:	n/a

This transmission is a “Health Advisory” provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

HOSPITALS: PLEASE SHARE WITH ALL MEDICAL, PEDIATRIC, NURSING AND LABORATORY STAFF IN YOUR HOSPITAL; **EMS COUNCILS:** PLEASE DISTRIBUTE AS APPROPRIATE; **FQHCs:** PLEASE DISTRIBUTE AS APPROPRIATE **LOCAL HEALTH JURISDICTIONS:** PLEASE DISTRIBUTE AS APPROPRIATE; **PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS:** PLEASE DISTRIBUTE TO YOUR MEMBERSHIP; **LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES:** PLEASE SHARE WITH ALL MEDICAL, INFECTION CONTROL, AND NURSING STAFF IN YOUR FACILITY

- Since early May, at least 36 cases of monkeypox virus infection have been identified in the United Kingdom, Portugal, and Spain.
- On May 18, Massachusetts confirmed a case in an adult male with recent travel to Canada.
- Clinicians should consider a diagnosis of monkeypox infection in people with an unexplained rash and:
 - Report travel in the last 30 days to a country with confirmed or suspected cases,
 - Report contact with a person or people with confirmed or suspected infections, or
 - Is a man who reports sexual contact with other men.
- Clinicians who suspect monkeypox in a patient should contact DOH’s Division of Infectious Disease Epidemiology or their local health department immediately at 717-787-3350.

Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH) provides this guidance based on available information about monkeypox and is subject to change.

On May 18, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health confirmed a single case of monkeypox virus infection in an adult male with recent travel to Canada. Since the beginning of May, the United Kingdom, Portugal, and Spain have all reported either confirmed or suspected cases of people with monkeypox.

Monkeypox is a rare but potentially serious viral illness that typically begins with flu-like illness and swelling of the lymph nodes and progresses to a rash on the face and body. Most infections last 2-to-4 weeks. In parts of central and west Africa where monkeypox occurs, people can be exposed through bites or scratches from rodents and small mammals, preparing wild game, or having contact with an

infected animal or possibly animal products. The virus does not spread easily between people; transmission can occur through contact with body fluids, monkeypox sores, items that have been contaminated with fluids or sores (e.g., clothing), or through respiratory droplets following prolonged face-to-face contact. Additional information about monkeypox can be found here: <https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/index.html>.

Based on findings of the Massachusetts case and the recent cases in the UK, clinicians should consider a diagnosis of monkeypox in people who present with an otherwise unexplained rash and:

- Traveled within the last 30 days to a country that has recently had confirmed or suspected cases of monkeypox,
- Report contact with a person or people with confirmed or suspected monkeypox, or
- Is a man who reports sexual contact with other men.

This clinical guidance is consistent with recommendations from UK health officials and US federal health officials, based on identified cases.

Suspected cases may present with early flu-like symptoms and progress to lesions that may begin on one site on the body and spread to other parts. Illness could be clinically confused with a sexually transmitted infection like syphilis or herpes, or with varicella zoster virus.

Patients with suspected monkeypox should be isolated in a negative pressure room, and all personnel should wear personal protective equipment (PPE) in accordance with recommendations for standard, contact, and airborne precautions. All healthcare workers (e.g., clinical staff and environmental staff) caring for a patient with suspect or confirmed monkeypox should be communicated the importance of maintaining proper isolation precautions so that infection is not transmitted to them or others.

Specimens collected for testing must have prior approval from DOH's Bureau of Epidemiology and must be sent to DOH's Bureau of Laboratories (BOL) at:

**PA Department of Health
Bureau of Laboratories
110 Pickering Way
Exton, PA 19341**

Ideal specimens for laboratory testing include lesion fluid, lesion roof, scabs, and crusts. Serum and whole blood can also be collected. Best practices are to collect multiple specimens from different locations on the body.

If monkeypox infection is suspected in a patient, clinicians should contact DOH's Bureau of Epidemiology immediately at 717-787-3350 or their local health department.

If you have questions about this guidance, please call your local health department or **1-877-PA-HEALTH (1-877-724-3258)**. Individuals interested in receiving further PA-HANs are encouraged to register at <https://han.pa.gov/>.

Categories of Health Alert messages:

Health Alert: conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

Health Advisory: provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

Health Update: provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.

This information is current as of May 19, 2022 but may be modified in the future. We will continue to post updated information regarding the most common questions about this subject.