



CDC Health Advisory: Mpox Caused by Human-to-Human Transmission of Monkeypox Virus with Geographic Spread in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Date: December 7, 2023

Public Health Message Type: Alert Advisory Update Information

Intended Audience: All public health partners Healthcare providers Infection preventionists
 Local health departments Schools/child care centers ACOs
 Animal health professionals Other:

Key Points:

- CDC issued a Health Advisory through the CDC Health Alert Network to notify clinicians and health departments about the occurrence, geographic spread, and sexually associated human-to-human transmission of Clade I Monkeypox virus (MPXV) in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The CDC Health Advisory is attached to this LINC message and can also be accessed at the following link: [Mpox Caused by Human-to-Human Transmission of Monkeypox Virus with Geographic Spread in the Democratic Republic of the Congo \(cdc.gov\)](https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2023/s0912-mpox-drc.html)
- MPXV has two distinct clades, and cases of Clade I have not been reported in the United States at this time, however clinicians should be aware of the possibility of Clade I MPXV in travelers who have been in DRC and who have clinical signs consistent with mpox.
- Clade I MPXV has previously been observed to be more transmissible and to cause more severe infections than Clade II.

Action Items:

(1) Healthcare providers:

- a. Notify the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) Communicable Disease Service (CDS) if you have a patient with mpox-like symptoms and history of travel to DRC in the 21 days prior to symptom onset. NJDOH can be reached via telephone at 609-826-4872 during business hours or 609-392-2020 outside of business hours.
- b. Healthcare providers should collect specimens from suspect mpox cases with history of travel to DRC in the 21 days prior to symptom onset to be tested at the NJDOH Public Health and Environmental Laboratories. Positive specimens will be subsequently forwarded to CDC for clade-specific testing. Healthcare providers should follow CDC and NJDOH specimen collection recommendations:
 - i. <https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/documents/topics/Monkeypox/NJ-PHEL-Monkeypox-Guidance.pdf>
 - ii. <https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/mpox/clinicians/prep-collection-specimens.html>

- c. Healthcare providers should always follow infection control recommendations for suspect mpox cases: <https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/mpox/clinicians/infection-control.html>
 - d. While the current threat for Clade I MPXV in travelers remain low, Clade II MPXV infections continue to occur in New Jersey and in the United States. Healthcare providers should continue to be alert for mpox cases and notify the local health department of mpox cases. Healthcare providers should continue to encourage vaccination with JYNNEOS for patients who are at increased risk of exposure and who have not yet received the two-dose series. Vaccine recommendations can be found here: [Mpox Vaccine Recommendations | Mpox | Poxvirus | CDC](#)
- (2) Local health departments:
- a. Notify NJDOH of any reported suspect mpox cases with a history of travel to DRC in the 21 days prior to symptom onset.
 - b. Perform prompt investigation and contact tracing for any mpox cases in your jurisdictions, including asking about travel history. All information should be documented in CDRSS. Follow guidelines specified in the NJDOH mpox chapter: https://www.nj.gov/health/monkeypox/documents/For%20Health%20Professionals/MPX_Chapter.pdf
- (3) Clinical laboratories:
- a. Some non-CDC laboratories may have options available for clade-specific testing. Laboratories who are performing clade-specific testing should alert NJDOH if they detect Clade I MPXV.
 - b. All regulations should be followed for packaging and transporting specimens from suspect mpox patients as Category B for diagnostic testing.
 - c. Clinical laboratories must receive approval from NJDOH Public Health and Environmental Laboratories (PHEL) prior to sending specimens for testing at PHEL.

Contact Information:

- Email: Cds.mpoxepi@doh.nj.gov
- Phone: New Jersey Department of Health, Communicable Disease Service 609-826-4872 during business hours, or 609-392-2020 outside of business hours

References and Resources:

- [Mpox Caused by Human-to-Human Transmission of Monkeypox Virus with Geographic Spread in the Democratic Republic of the Congo \(cdc.gov\)](#)
- <https://www.nj.gov/health/monkeypox/>
 - <https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/documents/topics/Monkeypox/NJ-PHEL-Monkeypox-Guidance.pdf>
 - <https://www.nj.gov/health/monkeypox/vaccines/index.shtml>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/mpox/index.html>
 - <https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/mpox/clinicians/index.html>
 - <https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/mpox/clinicians/infection-control.html>
 - <https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/mpox/clinicians/prep-collection-specimens.html>