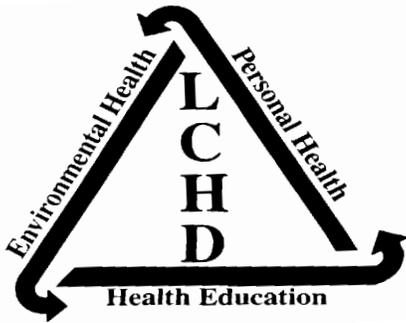


MEDIA RELEASE



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To: All Media

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For Immediate Release

“LaSalle County Health Department Identifies First Case of Monkeypox Virus in the County”

Ottawa, IL – Public health officials have identified the first probable case of monkeypox virus (MPV) in a LaSalle County resident. The case is considered probable until confirmed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). LaSalle County Health Department (LCHD) is collaborating with the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) to complete contact tracing for the case to identify any close contacts and provide vaccines to those identified as an exposure risk. This contact tracing approach is appropriate given the nature and transmission of the virus, and to coordinate timely risk assessment and appropriate post-exposure response. At this time, LaSalle County Health Department has not identified any additional cases in the county. To protect patient confidentiality, no further details relating to the patient will be disclosed.

According to Chris Pozzi, LaSalle County Health Department Administrator, “at this point in the investigation there is no indication there is a great risk of local spread of the virus. MPV does not spread as easily as the COVID-19 virus and typically requires close skin-to-skin contact. However, people should be aware of symptoms and that anyone in close contact with a person with MPV can get it regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation.”

According to the CDC, person-to-person transmission is possible through close physical contact with body fluids, monkeypox sores, items that have been contaminated with fluids or sores (clothing, bedding, etc.), or through respiratory droplets following prolonged face-to-face contact.

Monkeypox symptoms usually start within three weeks of exposure to the virus. You may experience all or only a few of the symptoms of monkeypox:

- Fever
- Headache
- Muscle aches and backache
- Swollen lymph nodes
- Chills
- Exhaustion

-more-

- A rash that can look like pimples or blisters that appear on the face, inside the mouth, and on other parts of the body, like the hands, feet, chest, genitals, or anus.

People who do not have monkeypox symptoms cannot spread the virus to others. However, anyone in close contact with a person with monkeypox can get it and should take steps to protect themselves.

Degree of Exposure: **Higher**

Exposure Characteristics

- Contact between an exposed individual's broken skin or mucous membranes with the skin lesions or bodily fluids from a person with monkeypox -OR-
- Any sexual or intimate contact involving mucous membranes (e.g., kissing, oral-genital, oral-anal, vaginal, or anal sex (insertive or receptive)) with a person with monkeypox -OR-
- Contact between an exposed individual's broken skin or mucous membranes with materials (e.g., linens, clothing, objects, sex toys) that have contacted the skin lesions or bodily fluids of a person with monkeypox (e.g., sharing food, handling or sharing of linens used by a person with monkeypox without having been disinfected[†] or laundered)

Degree of Exposure: **Intermediate**

Exposure Characteristics

- Being within 6 feet for a total of 3 hours or more (cumulative) of an unmasked person with monkeypox without wearing a surgical mask or respirator -OR-
- Contact between an exposed individual's intact skin with the skin lesions or bodily fluids from a person with monkeypox -OR-
- Contact between an exposed individual's intact skin with materials (e.g., linens, clothing, sex toys) that have contacted the skin lesions or bodily fluids from a person with monkeypox without having been disinfected[†] or laundered -OR-
- Contact between an exposed individual's clothing with the person with monkeypox's skin lesions or bodily fluids, or their soiled linens or dressings (e.g., during turning, bathing, or assisting with transfer)

Degree of Exposure: **Lower**

Exposure Characteristics

- Entry into the living space of a person with monkeypox (regardless of whether the person with monkeypox is present), and in the absence of any exposures above

Degree of Exposure: **No Risk**

Exposure Characteristics

- No contact with the person with monkeypox, their potentially infectious contaminated materials, nor entry into their living space

What should you do if you have symptoms of MPV?

- See a healthcare provider if you notice a new or unexplained rash or other monkeypox symptoms.
- Remind the healthcare provider that monkeypox is circulating.
- Avoid close contact (including intimate physical contact) with others until a healthcare provider examines you.
- Avoid close contact with pets or other animals until a healthcare provider examines you.
- If you're waiting for test results, follow the same precautions.
- If your test result is positive, stay isolated until your rash has healed, all scabs have fallen off, and a fresh layer of intact skin has formed.

While there currently is no specific treatment approved for MPV infections, antiviral drugs used to treat smallpox can sometimes be used, as smallpox and monkeypox viruses are genetically similar. If you have symptoms of monkeypox, talk to your health care provider, even if you don't think you had contact with someone who has monkeypox.

The monkeypox virus was discovered in 1958 and is endemic in parts of the world. Since March 2022 the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has been tracking multiple clusters of monkeypox that have been reported globally in 95 locations that do not normally report monkeypox.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the majority of human monkeypox cases experience mild to moderate symptoms and do not require hospitalization. Vaccines developed to protect against smallpox viruses may be used to prevent monkeypox infections. While LCHD has reported a confirmed case of MPV in LaSalle County, vaccine eligibility remains limited at this time.

LaSalle County Health Department encourages the public to stay informed and aware about the ongoing Monkeypox global outbreak. For more information on MPV visit <https://dph.illinois.gov/monkeypox.html> or <https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/>

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