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Executive Director

July 25, 2022
For Immediate Release

Additional Cases of Monkeypox Identified in DuPage County; Risk to Public Remains Low

DuPage County – The DuPage County Health Department (DCHD) has identified four additional cases of monkeypox in recent days, bringing the total number of cases in DuPage County to five. DCHD is working closely with the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the persons with monkeypox, and their healthcare providers for the appropriate testing, assessment, and coordination of antiviral treatment.

DCHD is also working to identify contacts to inform them about how to monitor their health and seek care if symptoms appear. If indicated, they are offered timely vaccination based on exposure risk. Persons with monkeypox are recommended to [self-isolate](#) and at this time, there is no indication there is risk of extensive local spread of the virus.

Monkeypox is a rare but potentially serious disease caused by infection with the monkeypox virus. Monkeypox virus is part of the same family of viruses as variola virus, the virus that causes smallpox. The symptoms of monkeypox are similar to but milder than the symptoms of smallpox. Most people who contract monkeypox will develop a rash, and some will develop flu-like symptoms beforehand. The flu-like symptoms may include fever, headache, muscle aches and backache, sore throat, cough, swollen lymph nodes, chills, or exhaustion. Sometimes, people get a rash first, followed by other symptoms. Others only experience a rash. Symptoms usually start within three weeks of exposure to the virus. Most infections last 2 to 4 weeks.

Anyone with a new or unexplained rash or [a rash that looks like monkeypox](#) should talk with their healthcare provider, even if they don't think they had contact with someone who has monkeypox. Avoid close contact (including intimate physical contact) with others until a healthcare provider examines you. Monkeypox does not spread easily between people; however, anyone in close contact with a person with monkeypox can get it and should take steps to protect themselves.

To prevent monkeypox infection:

- Avoid close, skin-to-skin contact with people who have a rash that looks like monkeypox.
 - Do not touch the rash or scabs of a person with monkeypox.
 - Do not kiss, hug, cuddle or have sex with someone with monkeypox.
 - Do not share eating utensils or cups with a person with monkeypox.
- Do not handle or touch the bedding, towels, or clothing of a person with monkeypox.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.



Established in 1945, DuPage County Health Department promotes physical and emotional health; prevents illness injury and disability; protects health from environmental risk factors, and strives to assure the provision of accessible, quality service.

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Currently, there is no specific treatment for the monkeypox virus infection; however, smallpox antiviral drugs and vaccines may be used to help prevent and treat monkeypox virus infections.

DuPage County Health Department has received limited doses of the JYNNEOS monkeypox vaccine and has begun distribution and administration. Healthcare providers are able to request the vaccine through DCHD. CDC recommends [vaccination](#) for people who have been in close contact with people who have monkeypox. While this current outbreak is largely affecting gay, bisexual, or other men who have sex with men, it is important to know anyone can get monkeypox. Currently, people who may be eligible for vaccination include:

- People who have been identified as a contact of someone with monkeypox
- People who are aware that one of their sexual partners in the past two weeks was diagnosed with monkeypox
- People who had multiple sexual partners in the past two weeks in an area with known monkeypox

Talk to your health care provider if you think you have been exposed to monkeypox or are at high risk for exposure.

It is important to protect yourself and lower the chance of getting monkeypox at crowded places like raves, parties, clubs, and festivals. When thinking about what to do, seek out information from credible sources like the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC), and consider how much close, personal, skin-to-skin contact is likely to occur at the event you plan to attend. If you feel sick or have a rash, do not attend any gathering, and see a healthcare provider.

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