



KENT COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT



COUNTY OF KENT

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STATE OF MARYLAND

First presumed case of human monkeypox identified in Kent County

August 18, 2022- The Kent County Health Department (KCHD) today confirmed the first presumed case of human monkeypox virus infection in a Kent County resident. The individual is isolating and contact tracing is underway to identify close contacts.

“Although the risk to the public remains low, this case and others in the Mid-Shore region remind us that we need to be informed about the virus, including understanding how to prevent infection, recognizing signs and symptoms, and knowing when to seek medical attention,” said KCHD Health Officer Bill Webb.

Human monkeypox is in the same family of viruses as smallpox but generally causes a milder infection. It can be spread between people through direct contact with skin lesions, body fluids or contaminated materials such as clothing or linens. It can also be spread through large respiratory droplets, which generally cannot travel more than a few feet, and prolonged face-to-face contact is required. The World Health Organization is in the process of establishing a new name for the virus.

Symptoms typically include fever, chills, new swelling of lymph nodes, and a distinctive rash that often starts on the face and spreads to other parts of the body; however, onset of rash lesions elsewhere in the absence of other symptoms has been reported. Symptoms generally appear seven to 14 days after exposure and, for most people, clear up within two to four weeks. Individuals identified as having been potentially exposed to this case will be monitored for symptoms for 21 days after exposure.

While the risk of human monkeypox transmission remains low, **the public is strongly encouraged to stay alert for any symptoms of the illness and to seek medical care immediately**, especially if you meet this criteria:

- Those who traveled to central or west African countries, parts of Europe where monkeypox cases were reported, or other areas with confirmed cases of monkeypox the month before their symptoms began;
- Those who have had close contact with a person with confirmed or suspected monkeypox; or
- Those who have had close or intimate in-person contact with individuals in a social network experiencing monkeypox activity, which includes men who have sex with men

Clinicians are urged to maintain a high index of suspicion for clinically compatible illness, including the characteristic rash, and to contact their local health department for consultation and potential testing. Resources for residents and clinicians are available on the Maryland Department of Health website. Visit health.maryland.gov/monkeypox. [Additional details about human monkeypox cases](#) are available on the CDC’s website.

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