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Champaign-Urbana Public Health District

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Champaign-Urbana Public Health District Officials Confirm First Probable Case of Monkeypox Virus in Champaign County

Patient is doing well and the probable case poses little risk to general public

CHAMPAIGN, IL – The Champaign-Urbana Public Health District (C-UPHD) and Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), announced today a single presumptive monkeypox case in an adult male Champaign County resident with recent travel history to Chicago.

Initial testing was completed Friday, July 8, 2022, at an IDPH laboratory, and confirmatory testing for monkeypox is pending at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Based on initial epidemiologic characteristics and the positive orthopoxvirus result at IDPH, health officials consider this a probable monkeypox infection.

C-UPHD and IDPH are working closely with the CDC to identify individuals with whom the patient may have been in contact while they were infectious. This contact tracing approach is appropriate given the nature and transmission of the virus. The person did not require hospitalization and is isolating at home in good condition. To protect patient confidentiality, no further details relating to the patient will be disclosed.

The case remains isolated and at this time there is no indication there is a great risk of extensive local spread of the virus, as monkeypox does not spread as easily as the COVID-19 virus. 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. Symptoms include a rash that can look like pimples or blisters that appears on the face, inside the mouth, and on other parts of the body, like the hands, feet, chest, genitals, or anus.

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Monkeypox is a rare, but potentially serious viral illness, which belongs to the Orthopoxvirus family, and typically begins with flu-like symptoms and swelling of the lymph nodes, and progresses to a rash on the face and body. Most infections last two to four weeks. Monkeypox is typically endemic to parts of central and west Africa, and 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.

Beginning in 2022, multiple cases of monkeypox have been reported in several countries that do not normally report monkeypox, including the United States. On May 18, 2022, a U.S. resident tested positive for monkeypox after returning to the U.S. from Canada. As of July 11, 2022, the CDC reports 767 confirmed cases of orthopox/monkeypox across multiple states (<https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/response/2022/index.html>). Anyone, regardless of sexual orientation, can spread monkeypox, but early data from this outbreak suggest that gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men make up a high number of initial cases. The CDC is urging healthcare providers in the United States to be alert for patients with rash illnesses consistent with monkeypox, regardless of travel history or specific risk factors for monkeypox, and regardless of gender or sexual orientation.

People who have a new or unexplained rash, sores, or symptoms, or have a confirmed exposure should see a healthcare provider, remind them that the virus is circulating in the community, and avoid sex or being intimate with anyone until they have been seen. If a person or their partner has monkeypox, they should follow the treatment and prevention recommendations outlined by their healthcare provider and avoid sex or being intimate with anyone until all sores have healed or have a fresh layer of skin formed.

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.

For more about this virus, visit:

<https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/> and <https://dph.illinois.gov/resource-center/news/2022/june/city--state-public-health-officials-confirm-first-case-of-monkey.html>

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