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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

July 28, 2022

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## **One Probable Case of Monkeypox in Kanawha County**

CHARLESTON, WEST VIRGINIA – The Kanawha-Charleston Health Department identified one probable case of monkeypox earlier this week, and Public Health Officer Dr. Steven Eshenaur is encouraging people not to panic and to learn more about the disease.

“Monkeypox is rare and is typically not fatal,” Eshenaur explained. “It spreads mostly through close, skin-on-skin contact. It doesn’t spread easily through the air like COVID-19 does and because of this, the threat to our community is relatively low.”

Eshenaur, who is a board-certified family physician and experienced emergency room doctor, performed the exam himself. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will conduct tests to confirm diagnosis, having already confirmed one case from Berkeley County earlier this month. Since May 18, 2022, the CDC has confirmed 4,639 cases of monkeypox in the United States.

Monkeypox symptoms include fever, headache, chills, muscle aches, swollen lymph nodes, fatigue, and a rash that can look like pimples or blisters that appear on the face, inside the mouth and on other parts of the body – hands, feet, chest, genitals or anus.

“If you have symptoms you should certainly check in with your healthcare provider,” he said. “It’s a scary-sounding and unpleasant-looking illness, but the chances of most of us getting it are quite low, and if we do get it, there are treatments available.”

Not everyone will need the monkeypox vaccine, Eshenaur added. West Virginia received only 213 vaccines in the first wave of distribution. “Contact tracing will guide us in who should get the vaccines that we do have. In most cases, they will go to those who have had close contact with anyone infected with monkeypox.”

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*Informational graphics follow. Please feel free to share these graphics.*

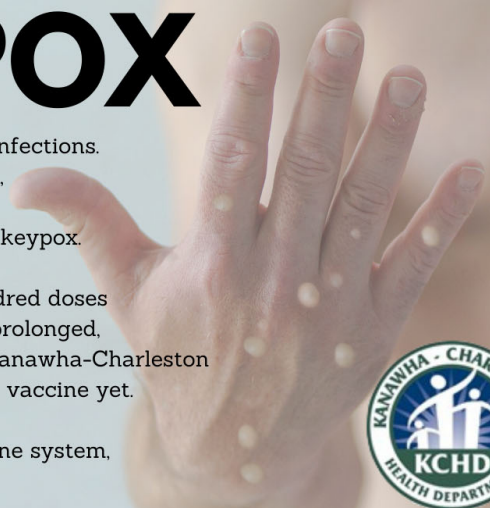
TREATMENT

# MONKEYPOX

There are treatments specifically for monkeypox virus infections. Monkeypox and smallpox viruses are genetically similar, so antiviral drugs and vaccines developed to protect against smallpox may be used to prevent and treat monkeypox.

At this time, West Virginia has been allotted a few hundred doses of vaccines that are reserved for people who have had prolonged, close contact with someone who has monkeypox. The Kanawha-Charleston Health Department is not administering the monkeypox vaccine yet.

If you contract monkeypox and have a weakened immune system, you should contact your health-care provider.



PREVENTION

# MONKEYPOX

In the case of monkeypox, the adage rings true: An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

- Avoid skin-to-skin contact with anyone who has a rash.
- Do not touch a rash or scabs.
- Do not kiss, hug, cuddle or have sex with anyone with the virus.
- Do not share eating utensils or cups.
- Do not handle or touch an infected person's bedding, towels, or clothing.
- As is always good practice, wash your hands often with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.



SHOULD YOU WORRY?

# MONKEYPOX

In the last week of July, West Virginia had two cases of monkeypox infection. This disease is relatively difficult to transmit and has a low chance of becoming a significant pandemic in the Mountain State.

Most people in our region and state don't need to be afraid of contracting the disease unless they have had close skin-to-skin contact with someone who has monkeypox.



## SYMPTOMS

# MONKEYPOX

Monkeypox symptoms are similar to smallpox symptoms, but milder. Monkeypox is rarely fatal.

- Fever and headache
- Muscle aches and backaches
- Swollen lymph nodes
- Chills and fatigue
- A rash that can look like pimples or blisters that appears on the face, inside the mouth, and on other parts of the body — hands, feet, chest, genitals, or anus.



## HOW IT SPREADS

# MONKEYPOX

The virus is spread through direct contact with infectious rash, scabs, or body fluids. It can also spread through:

- respiratory secretions during prolonged, face-to-face contact, or during intimate physical contact — kissing, cuddling, or sex
- touching items (such as clothing or linens) that previously touched infectious rash or body fluids
- scratches or bites from an infected animal or by preparing/eating infected meat

