

NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Contact: Daniel B. Smith
LDCPH Communications Officer
dsmith@ldchealth.org - (785) 843-3060

DOUGLAS COUNTY HAS FIRST CONFIRMED CASE OF MONKEYPOX

DOUGLAS COUNTY, Kansas (August 23, 2022) – Following positive Monkeypox cases in both Shawnee and Johnson Counties, KDHE has confirmed the first positive case in Douglas County, the third case in the state. The individual in question was tested by KDHE's health and environmental laboratory and both the individual and their close contacts have been treated with a vaccine shown to be effective against Monkeypox. At this time vaccine is in very limited supply and it is important for all residents to be aware of the symptoms and take steps to avoid exposure.

In typical cases, a person may experience symptoms including fever, headache, muscle aches, swollen lymph nodes, chills and exhaustion followed by the appearance of a rash that can look like pimples or blisters that may appear on the face, inside the mouth, and on other parts of the body like hands, feet, chest, or genitals. Not all cases will show symptoms before the onset of a rash, so KDHE strongly recommends anyone experiencing symptoms of a Monkeypox-like rash with other risk factors contact their health care provider as soon as possible. Risk factors for Monkeypox infection include the following scenarios within 21 days of first symptom onset:

- Contact with a person or people with a similar appearing rash or who received a diagnosis of confirmed or probable monkeypox, -OR-
- Close or intimate in-person contact with individuals in a social network experiencing Monkeypox activity including meeting partners through an online website, digital app or social event, -OR-
- Recent travel outside the US to a country with confirmed cases of Monkeypox or where Monkeypox virus is endemic, -OR-
- Contact with a dead or live wild animal or exotic pet that is an African endemic species or used a product derived from such animals (game meat, creams, lotions, powders, etc.)

Monkeypox spreads between people primarily through direct contact with infectious lesions, scabs, body fluids, or by respiratory secretions during prolonged, face-to-face contact. The virus can also spread through direct contact with materials that have touched body fluids or lesions, such as clothing or linens. However, standard cleaning practices and laundering reduces spread through these materials. Individuals are considered infectious from the onset of symptoms until lesions have crusted, those crusts have separated, and a fresh layer of healthy skin has formed underneath.

The incubation period of Monkeypox is usually from 7 to 14 days but can range from 5 to 21 days. Initial symptoms usually include fever, fatigue, headache and enlarged lymph nodes. A rash often starts on the face and then appears on the palms, arms, legs, and other parts of the body. Over a week or two, the rash changes from small, flat spots to tiny blisters that are similar to Chickenpox, and then to larger blisters. These can take several weeks to scab over and fall off. For information about Monkeypox visit kdhe.ks.gov/1923/Monkeypox

The KDHE Phone Bank is also available to assist in answering general questions. Individuals can call 1-866-KDHEINF (534-3463) Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.

If residents of Douglas County have been exposed to Monkeypox or are exhibiting clear symptoms they must call Lawrence-Douglas County Public Health's clinic at 785-843-0721 to arrange testing.