

Epi Update for Friday, October 14, 2022

CENTER FOR ACUTE DISEASE EPIDEMIOLOGY (CADE)
BUREAU OF HIV, STD, AND HEPATITIS

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Items for this week's Epi Update include

- **Monkeypox update**
- **In the news: Flu off to an early start as CDC warns about potentially severe season**
- **Meeting announcements and training opportunities**

Monkeypox update

An ongoing outbreak of monkeypox has spread across many countries that don't normally report monkeypox, including the U.S. As of October 13, 72,874 cases have been identified in 109 countries. A total of 27,096 cases have been identified in the U.S., including 27 cases identified in Iowa.

Men who have sex with men make up a high number of cases. However, anyone who has been in close contact with someone who has monkeypox is at risk. The virus is spreading mostly through close, intimate contact with someone who has monkeypox.

The rash associated with monkeypox involves vesicles or pustules that are deep-seated, firm or hard, and well circumscribed; the lesions may umbilicate or become confluent and progress over time to scabs. Presenting symptoms typically include fever, chills, distinctive rash, or new lymphadenopathy; however, onset of perianal or genital lesions in the absence of fever has been reported. The rash can be confused with other diseases (e.g., secondary syphilis, herpes, chancroid, and varicella zoster).

A high index of suspicion for monkeypox is warranted when evaluating people with a characteristic rash, particularly for men who report sexual contact with men and people reporting travel or contact to a monkeypox case. The features of monkeypox can easily be confused with sexually transmitted infections (STI). It is important to comprehensively evaluate patients presenting with genital or perianal ulcers for STIs. However, co-infections with monkeypox and STIs have been reported and presence of an STI does not rule out monkeypox.

Monkeypox, STIs, and the Importance of Concurrent Testing

Background

Cases of monkeypox (MPV) have been reported in countries that do not normally report monkeypox—including the United States. In the U.S., monkeypox cases have been reported in every state, including Iowa.

Anyone who has been in close contact with someone who has monkeypox is at risk of acquiring the virus. Early data suggest that gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men make up a high number of cases in the current outbreak.





Web Resources:
Iowa Division of Public Health monkeypox landing page: idph.iowa.gov/ehi/monkeypox

What should prompt clinical suspicion for monkeypox infection?

Clinicians should be alert to patients presenting with a **new characteristic rash or pustules**. This is especially true if the patient is part of a population experiencing higher rates of monkeypox.

The rash associated with monkeypox can be confused with other rashes encountered in clinical practice including herpes, syphilis, and varicella. Patients co-infected with Monkeypox virus and other infectious agents (e.g., varicella zoster, herpes, syphilis) are also not uncommon.

The CDC is encouraging clinicians to therefore have monkeypox on their differential diagnosis when presented with an STI-associated or STI-like rash, even if it is localized and not (yet) diffuse. When collecting specimens, consider taking multiple samples for **concurrent laboratory testing**.

Consider:  Monkeypox  Herpes  Varicella  Syphilis

For cases of suspected monkeypox infection:

Clinicians suspecting monkeypox infection should *immediately* contact CADE. During business hours: (800) 362-2736 After business: (515) 323-4360

Public Health
IOWA HHS

Clinicians must report suspected monkeypox cases to IDPH as soon as monkeypox is suspected and prior to collecting specimens.

- Contact IDPH by calling 515-242-5935 during business hours or 515-323-4360 outside of business hours.
- Contact SHL by calling 319-335-4500 or 1-800-421-4692.

For more information about the ongoing monkeypox outbreak, visit

www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/response/2022/index.html.

In the news: Flu off to an early start as CDC warns about potentially severe season

www.nbcnews.com/health/health-news/flu-early-start-cdc-warns-potentially-severe-season-rcna52115

Infographic: Get yourself and your family vaccinated



To view in full size, visit

www.cdc.gov/flu/images/resource-center/toolkit/social-media-toolkit/Take3_GetVaccinated_Twitter.jpg.

Meeting announcements and training opportunities

Want to improve your infection prevention and control skills? Registration is now open for Iowa HHS's 2022 *Virtual Infection Prevention and Control Conference*. The conference will take place on Tuesday, November 8, beginning at 7:45 AM and ending at 5 PM. It is FREE and will be of particular interest for anyone responsible for Infection Prevention and Control programs in the healthcare setting. Nursing continuing education contact hours will be awarded. To register, visit <https://go.iastate.edu/AS9S8T>.

Have a healthy and happy week!

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