

Monkeypox Update

Rit 2.0 Lebanon Team



On 20 May 2022 news about monkeypox started to reach local news media and social media outlets in Lebanon. As soon as that happened, rumors started to circulate. To-date, procedures and measures to-be taken by the Lebanese government and private health sector organizations remain controlled, with staying alert to new cases and setting up surveillance, early identification and reporting, and investigation tools in coordination with WHO. As for procurement of tests and vaccines, there is no need for it at the national level as of yet, as there are no active cases in Lebanon nor anywhere close in the region, and it is a controllable virus with limited serious side effects, more visible symptoms than COVID-19 and less transmission and mortality rates.

This Rumor is taken from Twitter

Rumor

“Why are some people saying that monkeypox is God’s punishment for LGBTQ, and they are responsible for spreading it?”



Facts

-  Stigmatizing groups of people because of a disease is never acceptable because it risks further marginalizing groups that may already be vulnerable to societal discrimination or verbal or physical attacks. Stigma can be a barrier to ending an outbreak as it may prevent people from seeking care out of fear and can lead to undetected spread and greater risks for all of society.
-  Monkeypox can spread from one person to another through close physical contact, including sexual contact. The risk of becoming infected with monkeypox is not limited to people who are sexually active or men who have sex with men. Anyone who has close physical contact with someone who is infectious is at risk.
-  Not all of the people who have been diagnosed in the current monkeypox outbreak have been men who have sex with men. Officials said it was too early to say why, but one reason why monkeypox could be more noticed in this demographic could be because they may be more likely to seek regular sexual health screening.
-  The virus can be transmitted through contact with an infected person or animal or contaminated surfaces. Typically, the virus enters the body through broken skin, inhalation or the mucous membranes in the eyes, nose or mouth.
-  Researchers believe that human-to-human transmission is mostly through inhalation of large respiratory droplets rather than direct contact with bodily fluids or indirect contact through clothes, although transmission through those ways can still happen. Human-to-human transmission rates for monkeypox have historically been limited. monkeypox has had an R0 of 2.13; that’s to say that an infected person typically spreads the disease to two or three other people. However, epidemiological modelling for the current surge in cases estimates that the R0 could rise. Over time, most human infections with monkeypox have resulted from a primary, animal-to-human transmission.

Relevant WHO courses:

 [Monkeypox: Epidemiology, preparedness and response for African \(openwho.org\)](#)

 [Monkeypox: Introductory course for African outbreak contexts | OpenWHO](#)

Monkeypox can be transmitted through contact with an



Infected Person



Infected Animal



Contaminated Surface

Recommendations

For Humanitarian Workers

- Increase preparedness efforts by focusing on communicating trusted and factual information, as well as reporting rumors in your community, especially ones that could lead to harm. You can contact us on the following emails to report rumors: <https://ee.humanitarianresponse.info/x/l3yfl2qn>
- Raising awareness of risk factors and educating people about the measures they can take to reduce exposure to the virus is the main prevention strategy for monkeypox.
- All health-related information and communication should be derived from official and trusted sources such as WHO, the MoPH, and its associated organizations, as “the Ministry has all the valid information and developments related to monkeypox, and it is the MoPH who is the official organization responsible for publishing that information and raising awareness about preventive measures, in cooperation with the union.”
- It is important to pay extra attention to the LGBT community while providing the needed health and protection services accordingly as updates unfold about monkeypox, due to potential use of the disease to further social ostracization of the community. Continue efforts of providing medical services, mental health services, and referral services to members of the community as needs arise.
- Proactive risk communication and multiple community engagement activities should be carried out to increase awareness, provide updates and guidance to those at increased risk and the wider public.

List of Practical Resources

- [Managing epidemics: Key facts about major deadly diseases](#) (page 170) (Geneva: World Health Organization; 2018).
- [Monkeypox: Introduction \(online course\)](#) (Geneva: World Health Organization; 2019).
- [Monkeypox Outbreak Toolbox \(who.int\)](#)
- [Monkeypox \(who.int\)](#)
- [WHO calls monkeypox outbreaks containable, proposes stockpile to share vaccines and treatment](#)