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.

Rumors 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 easy 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.

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.

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.”

WHO calls monkeypox outbreaks containable, proposes stockpile to share vaccines and treatment.

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.