



NAVY AND MARINE CORPS FORCE HEALTH PROTECTION COMMAND IMPROVING READINESS THROUGH PUBLIC HEALTH ACTION

AUG 2024 MPOX PHEIC GUIDANCE 16 August 2024

Situation: On 14 Aug 2024, the World Health Organization (WHO) Director-General declared a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) due to the spread of mpox virus outside of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) into several neighboring countries. Spread to additional countries during this PHEIC is likely, however, Navy and Marine Corps Force Health Protection Command assesses the overall risk to force as low.

What is mpox? Mpox is a disease caused by infection with *Monkeypox virus*, one of several “pox” viruses that can cause human illness. Sporadic outbreaks of mpox occur in Central and West Africa.

How is the August 2024 PHEIC different from the July 2022 PHEIC? There are two types of mpox, clade I and clade II. The 2022 PHEIC involved clade II mpox and spread predominantly, but not exclusively, through sexual contact. The current outbreak involves a new variant of clade I. Historically, clade I causes a higher percentage of severe illness or death as compared to clade II. The current clade I outbreak in DRC involves several different types of transmission including person-to-person (through sexual contact, household contact, and within the healthcare setting) as well as contact with infected animals and animal carcasses.

How is mpox transmitted? Both clades of mpox can spread through direct contact with infected wild animals, through close contact with a person with mpox (including intimate or sexual contact), and through contact with objects, fabrics, and surfaces that have not been disinfected after use by someone with mpox.

What are symptoms of mpox? Symptoms often include a painful rash that may appear on the face, hands, feet, chest, genitals, anus, or inside the mouth that initially look like pimples or blisters. Other symptoms of mpox include fever, chills, swollen lymph nodes, exhaustion, muscle aches and backache, headache, and respiratory symptoms. Symptoms typically start within 21 days of exposure.

Is a vaccine available? Yes. Two doses of the JYNNEOS vaccine should protect against the type of mpox spreading in DRC and neighboring countries. JYNNEOS is fully Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved for the prevention of mpox and readily available within the Department of Defense. Mpox vaccination can be considered for high-risk persons and persons with known, suspected, or anticipated exposure to someone with mpox.

What to do if exposed or infected with mpox? Individuals who may have been exposed to mpox should take steps to protect their health and the health of others. Close contacts of someone who has mpox should monitor for signs and symptoms for 21 days after exposure. Close contacts of someone who has mpox can get vaccinated to prevent or lessen the severity of disease. Getting vaccinated as soon as possible after exposure to someone with mpox provides the best chance to prevent the disease or make it less severe.



NAVY AND MARINE CORPS FORCE HEALTH PROTECTION COMMAND IMPROVING READINESS THROUGH PUBLIC HEALTH ACTION

Persons with recent travel to impacted areas who are concerned they may have signs or symptoms of mpox should contact their nearest military treatment facility or clinic for evaluation. Please call ahead before visiting in person to help minimize exposure to others. Do not touch or scratch the rash, which can spread the rash to other parts of the body. Stay away from other people and avoid sharing things you have used or touched until you see a healthcare provider.

Information for Travelers: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) currently recommends enhanced precautions for travelers to areas experiencing mpox transmission. Precautions include:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick with signs and symptoms of mpox, including those with skin or genital lesions.
- Avoid contact with wild animals (alive or dead), such as small mammals, including rodents (rats, squirrels), and non-human primates (monkeys, apes).
- Avoid contact with contaminated materials used by people who are sick (such as clothing, bedding, or materials used in healthcare settings) or that came into contact with wild animals.
- Avoid eating or preparing meat from wild animals (bushmeat) or using products (creams, lotions, powders) derived from wild animals.

Operational Forces Considerations: Individual travelers and units deploying to impacted areas should receive pre-travel briefing detailing signs and symptoms of mpox as well as current CDC precautions to prevent exposure to mpox. Travelers should be counseled to avoid situations that increase potential exposure to mpox as described above.

Travelers returning from impacted areas should remain vigilant for signs and symptoms of mpox for 21 days after departing an impacted area.

Pre-travel mpox immunizations can be considered for travelers to areas experiencing transmission who have an increased risk of personal or occupational exposure. This may include animal handlers, veterinary personnel with animal contact, laboratory personnel, security personnel, medical personnel, civil engineers, special operations, and civil affairs personnel. Additionally, immunization can be considered for travelers to areas experiencing transmission who have the potential to come in close physical contact with local populations or animals.

Additional Resources:

Detailed guidance on MPX prevention and control measures for Fleet and operational units can be found in the CAC-enabled NMCFHPC mpox toolbox:

<https://obiwan2.health.mil/sites/nmcphc/pps/SiteAssets/WebPartPages/Monkeypox-Toolbox.aspx>.

Navy Environmental and Preventive Medicine Units (NEPMUs) can provide consultative assistance with contact tracing, mitigation, isolation measures, education, and messaging:

<https://www.med.navy.mil/Navy-Marine-Corps-Public-Health-Center/Field-Activities/>.

Additional information and resources for mpox can be found at the NMCFHPC website:

<https://www.med.navy.mil/Navy-and-Marine-Corps-Force-Health-Protection-Command/Preventive-Medicine/Program-and-Policy-Support/Monkeypox/>.