



To: CAHAN San Diego Participants

Date: October 21, 2025

From: Public Health Services

#### Health Advisory Update #4: Community Spread of Clade I Mpox in Southern California

##### Key Messages

- Three unrelated cases of clade I mpox have been reported in residents of Southern California without recent travel to regions where clade I mpox virus is known to circulate, indicating community transmission.
- While no clade I mpox has been reported in San Diego County, overall mpox cases have increased over the last two months in the region.
- Clade I mpox virus (MPXV) can cause severe disease, and the risk of severe disease and complications is highest for people with weakened immune systems. It may be transmitted through close contact (e.g., massage or cuddling), shared personal items, or sexual contact.
- Providers with MPXV results from in-house testing consistent with clade I MPXV should have the sample transferred to San Diego County Public Health Laboratory using their normal courier process.
- Commercial laboratories should immediately contact the San Diego County Public Health Laboratory to arrange clade-specific MPXV testing for orthopoxvirus-positive specimens for which clade determination has not been done or clade II MPXV testing is negative or indeterminate.
- The two-dose JYNNEOS vaccine remains the most effective tool for preventing and decreasing risk of severe illness due to clade I and II mpox, in addition to precautions to avoid exposure.

##### Situation

The [California Department of Public Health \(CDPH\)](#) and local health officials in the [City of Long Beach](#) and [Los Angeles County](#) have identified three unrelated cases of clade I mpox in Southern California residents who did not report recent travel to a region where clade I mpox virus (MPXV) is known to circulate. All three cases were hospitalized and are now recovering. Local health departments and CDPH are conducting enhanced surveillance and contact tracing to identify any additional cases and sources of infection and prevent further transmission. Public health investigation of these cases indicates that person-to-person community spread of clade I MPXV is occurring in Southern California, primarily impacting communities of gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men (MSM) and their social networks. Although mpox can affect anyone, the risk to the public is currently low.

##### Background

Since 2024, there has been a large and ongoing [outbreak of clade I mpox in Central and Eastern African countries](#) and travel-associated clade I mpox cases in other parts of Africa, Australia, Europe, Asia, North America, and South America. As reported on [November 22, 2024](#), the first case of clade I mpox in the United States (U.S.) and in

California was confirmed in San Mateo County in a person who had recently traveled to a country known to have active spread of clade I MPXV. Prior to October 8, 2025, there were six reported cases of clade I mpox in the U.S., including the San Mateo County case, all of which were associated with travel to regions where clade I MPXV is known to circulate. The three recent cases from Los Angeles County are the first clade I mpox cases that have no association with travel and indicate that community transmission of clade I MPXV is occurring in Southern California, although public health authorities in the City of Long Beach and Los Angeles County are coordinating with CDPH and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to prevent further transmission and the overall risk of clade I mpox to the public remains low.

To date, no cases of clade I mpox have been reported in San Diego County, and overall mpox case activity has been low in the region in 2025 compared to recent years. However, [reported cases](#) have increased since August 2025. As of October 16, 2025, a total of 19 mpox cases were reported in San Diego County in 2025 (representing a decrease from 469, 61, and 79 cases reported in 2022, 2023, and 2024, respectively). Twelve (63.2%) of these cases were reported since August 1, 2025 (4 in August, 5 in September, and 3 in October).

Clade I MPXV may be more severe than clade II MPXV, which causes mild to moderate illness and has been circulating at low levels in the U.S. since 2022. Clade I MPXV may be transmitted through close contact (e.g., massage or cuddling), shared personal items, or sexual contact. Currently, there is no evidence that clade I MPXV is more transmissible than clade II MPXV, but transmission studies are ongoing. Both clades of MPXV can cause flu-like symptoms followed by rash, as described in previous health alerts. Laboratory testing to differentiate clade I from clade II MPXV is available in the region through the San Diego County Public Health Laboratory (SDCPHL).

The [two-dose JYNNEOS vaccine](#) is the most effective tool to prevent infection with and severe disease due to clade I and II MPXV, in addition to preventive measures to avoid MPXV exposure. Currently, there is no recommendation for a vaccine booster for individuals who have completed the two-dose series.

## Actions Requested

1. **Vaccinate** individuals who are vulnerable to acquiring mpox. CDPH recommends the two-dose JYNNEOS vaccine for anyone who:
  - Is gay, bisexual, or other MSM or
  - Is transgender, nonbinary, or gender-diverse or
  - Has human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), or is taking/eligible for HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) or doxycycline sexually transmitted infection post-exposure prophylaxis (doxy-PEP) or
  - Was exposed to someone with mpox in the last 14 days or
  - Is planning travel to sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East, or a country with a clade I mpox outbreak and anticipates sexual contact or intimate contact while traveling or
  - Anticipates attending a commercial sex event or venue (like a sex club or bathhouse) or
  - Has a sex partner with any of the above risks or
  - Requests mpox vaccination, even if they have not disclosed any risks listed above.
2. **Incorporate** assessments for mpox risk and vaccination status into routine sexual healthcare and general primary care, and **test** people with [signs or symptoms suggestive of mpox](#), regardless of vaccination status or previous infection.
3. **Submit** only the following clinical specimens to the SDCPHL for clade-specific MPXV testing:
  - Positive orthopoxvirus (non-variola orthopoxvirus (NVO) or OPXV) without clade determination
  - Positive MPXV generic without clade determination
  - Positive orthopoxvirus (NVO or OPXV) with a negative clade II MPXV
  - Positive orthopoxvirus (NVO or OPXV) with indeterminate clade II MPXV

4. **Prior to sending specimen for testing or any other inquiry, contact San Diego County Public Health Laboratory at (858) 325-6400 during business hours, and (619) 666-8889 for afterhours. Complete the online fillable [Test Requisition form \(sandiegocounty.gov\)](#) for sample submission.**
5. **Immediately report** probable, suspected, and confirmed clade I MPXV cases to the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency as soon as possible and no later than 24 hours after diagnosis by submitting a Confidential Morbidity Report (by fax to (619) 692-8541 or by secure e-mail to [phs-hshb-stdreporting-fax.hhsa@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:phs-hshb-stdreporting-fax.hhsa@sdcounty.ca.gov)).

## Resources

### National

[First Case of Clade I Mpox Diagnosed in the United States | Health Alert Network \(November 18, 2024\)](#)

[Clinical Features of Mpox | Mpox | Poxvirus | CDC](#)

[Interim Clinical Considerations for Use of Vaccine for Mpox Prevention in the United States | Mpox | Poxvirus | CDC](#)

[Tecovirimat \(TPOXX\) for the Treatment of Mpox | Mpox | Poxvirus | CDC](#)

[Mpox in the United States and Around the World: Current Situation | Mpox | Poxvirus | CDC](#)

[Infection Prevention and Control in Healthcare Settings | Mpox | Poxvirus | CDC](#)

### State

[CAHAN Disease Notification – Community Spread of Clade I Mpox Within California | CDPH](#)

[Mpox Guidance | CDPH](#)

[Mpox Vaccination | CDPH](#)

[Mpox Clinical Recognition and Testing Quicksheet and Overview | California Prevention Training Center](#)

### County

[Health Advisory: Clade I Mpox Virus in Travelers to the Democratic Republic of the Congo \(December 15, 2023\)](#)

[Health Advisory Update #2: Clade I Mpox Human-to-Human Transmission and Geographical Spread in Africa \(August 15, 2024\)](#)

[Health Advisory Update #3: First Case of Clade I Mpox Diagnosed in California and the United States in a Returning Traveler \(November 22, 2024\)](#)

[Mpox in San Diego County](#)

[Mpox Vaccine](#)

Thank you for your participation.

### CAHAN San Diego

County of San Diego Health & Human Services Agency

HIV, STD, and Hepatitis Branch

Phone (for providers, M-F 8AM-5PM): (619) 692-5500 (referrals for mpox evaluation, testing, and/or treatment),

(619) 609-3245 (clinical consultations for challenging cases); Fax: (619) 692-8541

E-mail: [cahan@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:cahan@sdcounty.ca.gov)

Secure Website: <http://cahan.ca.gov>

Public Website: <http://www.cahansandiego.com>