



To: CAHAN San Diego Participants

Date: August 10, 2026

From: Public Health Services

Health Advisory Update #5: First Confirmed Clade I Mpox Case in San Diego County in Returning Traveler

Key Messages

- On August 5, 2026, the first case of clade I mpox virus (MPXV) infection in San Diego County was confirmed in a resident who had recently traveled to areas of Western Europe where clade I mpox outbreaks have been reported.
- Public health investigation is ongoing, and no additional cases or symptomatic contacts to this case have been identified to date. The overall risk of clade I MPXV to the general population in San Diego County remains low.
- Providers and laboratories should immediately report suspected clade I mpox cases to the County of San Diego HIV, STD, and Hepatitis Branch, which can assist in arranging confirmatory testing for clade I MPXV.
- The two-dose JYNNEOS vaccine is recommended to persons who are vulnerable to mpox, including anyone who plans to travel internationally outside of the United States, regardless of destination, and anticipates sexual or intimate contact while traveling. Booster (i.e., third) doses are not currently recommended.

Situation

On August 5, 2026, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) confirmed the first case of clade I mpox in a San Diego County resident. Prior to developing symptoms, the patient had traveled to [countries in Western Europe where clade I mpox outbreaks have recently been reported](#). The patient had a mild illness that did not require hospitalization and is recovering after seeking medical care for mpox symptoms. The HIV, STD, and Hepatitis Branch (HSHB) of Public Health Services is working in conjunction with CDPH and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to investigate potential contacts of the patient, and no additional cases have been detected to date. The overall risk of clade I mpox virus (MPXV) to the general population in San Diego County continues to be low. Clade II MPXV, which drove the 2022 global mpox outbreak, continues to circulate at low levels in San Diego County and throughout the United States (U.S.).

Background

As of July 2026, there have been [more than 30 clade I mpox cases](#) reported in the U.S., including several in California, and cases have increased in frequency since March 2026. Most cases have been diagnosed among people who have traveled internationally to areas with known outbreaks or were linked to people who had traveled from these areas. The 1b subclade, which initially impacted eastern areas of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in late 2023, has driven much of the spread throughout [Central and Eastern Africa](#) and most travel-associated clade I mpox cases in other parts of the world. Since Fall 2025, [several countries in Western Europe](#) have reported clade Ib mpox cases among individuals who had no documented history of international travel, indicating local transmission. In October 2025, there were also [three unrelated cases of clade I mpox in Los Angeles County](#) who reported no recent travel, indicating limited community transmission in southern California.

This travel-associated case is the first confirmed clade I mpox case in San Diego County. Clade IIb mpox cases continue to occur sporadically in the region. Since January 1, 2026, there have been 27 mpox cases reported in San Diego County, including the recently identified clade I mpox case. Two cases (8%) were hospitalized, and there have been no mpox-associated deaths in 2026. All 2026 cases identified as male, and the median age was 33 years (range 17-53 years). Eighteen (72%) of cases were Hispanic or Latine, 4 (16%) were white, and 2 (8%) were Black or African American. Nineteen (73%) were unvaccinated, 7 (27%) were fully vaccinated, and 1 (4%) was partially vaccinated.

Mpox can affect anyone, and transmission can occur through sexual contact, other close or intimate contact (e.g., massage, cuddling), sharing a household with someone who has mpox, and personal items. Clade Ib cases initially spread through heterosexual intimate or sexual contact between adults, as well as through household contact, in Africa. In Western Europe, clade Ib mpox cases have primarily been related to intimate or sexual exposure among men who have sex with men (MSM). The single clade I case and 86% of total mpox cases in San Diego County in 2026 were also MSM.

Clade I MPXV may cause more severe disease than clade II MPXV, although recent data have indicated that the severity of disease caused by clade Ib MPXV may be similar to that of disease caused by clade IIb MPXV. For all clades, risk of severe disease is greatest for those with weakened immune systems, including those with advanced human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection. To date, there have been no deaths among travel-associated clade Ib mpox cases. It is unclear whether clade I MPXV is more transmissible than clade II MPXV; transmission studies are ongoing. The two-dose JYNNEOS vaccine reduces the risk of infection and severe disease due to both MPXV clades and is recommended to people who may be vulnerable to mpox. This includes people planning to travel internationally outside of the U.S. (particularly to areas where clade I mpox is spreading between people) who anticipate sexual or intimate contact while traveling.

Actions Requested

1. **Test** for mpox in patients who present with suggestive [signs and symptoms](#), regardless of previous vaccination against mpox or previous mpox disease.
2. **Ensure** [infection control measures](#) are in place for all suspected clade I and II mpox cases at the time of clinical care delivery, including appropriate source control (e.g., covering of lesions with clothing or bandages, well-fitted face mask) and use of full personal protective equipment (PPE) when evaluating someone with mpox symptoms.
3. **Vaccinate** individuals who are vulnerable to acquiring mpox as a part of routine sexual healthcare. Boosters (third doses) are not recommended currently. 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 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 internationally (outside of the U.S.), particularly to a country where clade I mpox is spreading between people, 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.
4. **Submit** only the following clinical specimens to the San Diego County Public Health Laboratory (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
5. **Prior to sending a specimen for testing or any other inquiry, contact** SDCPHL at (858) 325-6400 during business hours and (619) 666-8889 for after hours. Complete the online fillable [Test Requisition Form \(sandiegocounty.gov\)](https://sandiegocounty.gov) for sample submission.
 6. **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).

Resources

National

[Clade I Mpox Outbreaks | CDC](#)

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

[Clinical Overview of Clade I and Clade II Mpox | CDC](#)

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

State

[Mpox Guidance | CDPH](#) (includes links to mpox-related health advisories and updates)

[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 \(November 22, 2024\)](#)

[Health Advisory Update #4: Community Spread of Clade I Mpox in Southern California](#)

[Mpox in San Diego County](#)

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

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

Public Website: <http://sandiegocounty.gov/cahan>