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Contact: Vickie Ionno, New Philadelphia City Health Commissioner, 330-364-4491, ext. 1208

Jennifer Demuth, TCHD Director of Health Promotion, 330-343-5555, ext. 170

FIRST CASE OF MONKEY POX REPORTED IN TUSCARAWAS COUNTY

TUSCARAWAS COUNTY — Today, the Tuscarawas County and New Philadelphia City Health Departments received notice from the Ohio Department of Health of the first confirmed case of monkeypox in a Tuscarawas County adult resident. To protect patient privacy, no further demographic details will be shared about the individual. The health departments are following CDC guidance for assisting the individual and any close contacts.

"The confirmation of a monkeypox case in a Tuscarawas County resident is not cause for panic," explained Vickie Ionno, New Philadelphia City Health Commissioner. "Monkeypox does not spread as easily as the common cold, COVID-19, or the flu, and the risk of community spread is low."

"Both health departments are committed to working together to prevent the spread of monkeypox within Tuscarawas County," noted Katie Seward, Tuscarawas County Health Commissioner.

It is important to note that monkeypox can spread to anyone through close, personal, often skin-to-skin contact, including the following:
- Direct contact with monkeypox rash, scabs, or body fluids from a person with monkeypox.
- Touching objects, fabrics (clothing, bedding, or towels), and surfaces that have been used by someone with monkeypox.
- Contact with respiratory secretions.

This direct contact can happen during intimate contact, including the following:
- Hugging, massage, kissing.
- Prolonged face-to-face contact.
- Touching fabrics and objects during sex that were used by a person with monkeypox and that have not been disinfected, such as bedding and towels.
- Oral, anal, and vaginal sex or touching the genitals or anus of a person with monkeypox.

A person with monkeypox can spread it to others from the time symptoms start until the rash has fully healed and a fresh layer of skin has formed. The illness typically lasts 2-4 weeks.

Monkeypox symptoms:
People with monkeypox get a rash that may be located on or near the genitals or anus and could be on other areas like the hands, feet, chest, face, or mouth.
• The rash will go through several stages, including scabs, before healing.
• The rash can initially look like pimples or blisters and may be painful or itchy.

Other symptoms of monkeypox can include:
• Fever
• Chills
• Swollen lymph nodes
• Exhaustion
• Muscle aches and backache
• Headache
• Respiratory symptoms (e.g., sore throat, nasal congestion, or cough)

You may experience all or only a few symptoms
• Sometimes, people have flu-like symptoms before the rash.
• Some people get a rash first, followed by other symptoms.
• Others only experience a rash.

Public health experts advise the following precautions to avoid contracting monkeypox:
• Avoid close, skin-to-skin contact with people who have a rash that looks like monkeypox.
• Avoid contact with objects and materials that a person with monkeypox has used.
• Wash your hands often with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer, especially before eating or touching your face and after using the bathroom.
• Testing is the best way to determine if an infection is monkeypox. Contact your health care provider if you have a new rash or have had close contact with someone who may have monkeypox.

The CDC does not recommend the monkeypox vaccine for the general public. The vaccine is available for people who have been exposed to monkeypox or are at high risk for exposure and meet the CDC's strict criteria for being vaccinated. Currently, Ohio has a very limited supply of vaccine to help prevent monkeypox, and the New Philadelphia City and Tuscarawas County Health Departments are working with individuals who qualify for vaccination.

Visit the Ohio Department of Health's monkeypox dashboard website at https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/mpx/monkeypox-dashboard for additional information.

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