

Monkeypox spreads to Austria, Czech Republic, Slovenia

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The Czech Republic, Austria and Slovenia have registered their first cases of monkeypox, health authorities said Tuesday.

In the Czech Republic, the disease was detected in a man at Prague's Military University Hospital, according to Pavel Dlouhy, head of the Czech Society for Infectious Diseases.

"It was only a question of time, we have been expecting this for days," Dlouhy told AFP.

The Czech National Institute of Public Health said in a statement Tuesday that the sick Czech had shown symptoms of the disease after returning from a music festival in Antwerp, Belgium in early May.

In Austria, a man, who was hospitalised in Vienna on Sunday with symptoms of monkeypox, including fever, has been confirmed to have contracted the disease, the capital's health authorities said.

In Slovenia, a man, who developed symptoms after returning from the Canary Islands, has also been confirmed to have monkeypox, according to health authorities.

Over the past few days, several European and North American countries including Britain, France and the United States have reported cases of the rare virus, which is endemic in parts of Africa.

Medical authorities have said, however, that the risk that the disease will spread widely is low.

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