

# CDC urges clinicians to remain on the lookout for mpox virus infections

June 7 2024, by Elana Gotkine

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Among emergency department patients evaluated for an mpox-compatible rash, the prevalence of mpox is 1.5 percent, [according to research](#) published in the June 6 issue of the U.S. Centers for Disease

Control and Prevention's *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*.

Carl T. Berdahl, M.D., from Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles, and colleagues screened for mpox reemergence and examined potentially unsuspected cases among non-gay and [bisexual men](#) who have sex with men (GBMSM) by conducting surveillance of patients aged three months and older with an mpox-compatible rash at 13 U.S. emergency departments during June to December 2023.

Using [polymerase chain reaction](#), lesions were tested for mpox virus. A total of 196 persons were enrolled; 55.1 percent were males and 6.6 percent were GBMSM.

The researchers found that 46.4 and 23.5 percent of enrolled persons were non-Hispanic White and non-Hispanic Black or African American, respectively; 38.8 percent reported Hispanic or Latino ethnicity. Overall, 10.7 percent of enrollees reported unstable housing, while 12.2 percent lacked [health insurance](#).

Among emergency department patients evaluated for an mpox-compatible rash, the prevalence of mpox was 1.5 percent; all those with a confirmed mpox diagnosis identified as GBMSM, reported being HIV-negative, not being vaccinated against mpox, and having engaged in sex with at least one partner met through smartphone dating applications. There were no cases seen among women, children, or unhoused persons.

"Mpox continues to circulate among persons at risk for mpox, primarily GBMSM with sexual risk factors, and underscore the importance of educating persons at risk for mpox regarding behavioral risks and encouraging these persons to be vaccinated," the authors write.

**More information:** Carl T. Berdahl et al, Mpox Surveillance Based on Rash Characteristics — 13 Emergency Departments, United States,

June–December 2023, *MMWR. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* (2024). [DOI: 10.15585/mmwr.mm7322a1](https://doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm7322a1)

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