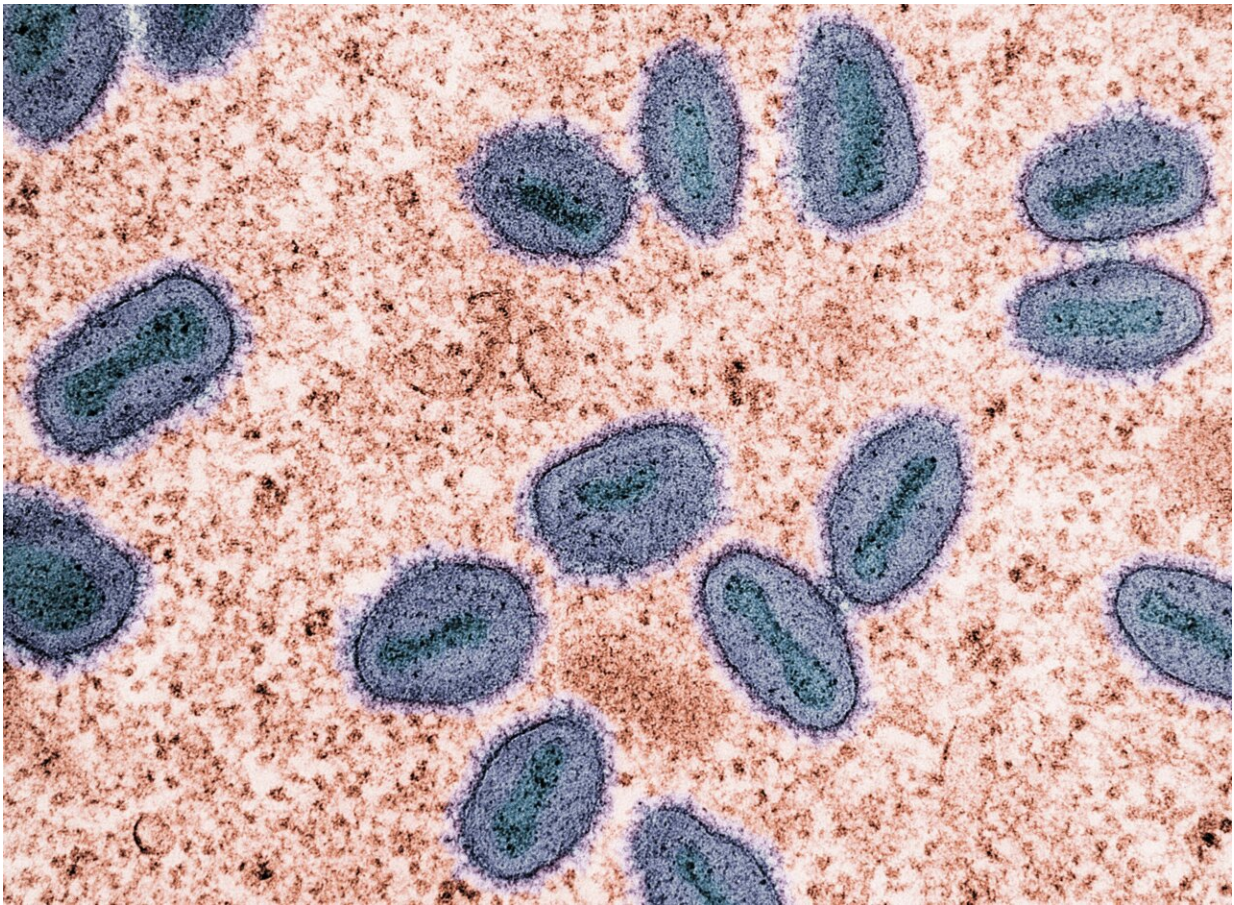


Sweden reports first case of deadly mpox strain outside Africa

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Sweden on Thursday announced the first case outside Africa of the more dangerous variant of mpox, which the WHO has declared a global public

health emergency.

The country's public health agency confirmed to AFP that it was the same strain of the virus that has surged in the Democratic Republic of Congo since September 2023, known as the Clade 1b subclade.

"A person who sought care" in Stockholm "has been diagnosed with mpox caused by the clade I variant. It is the first case caused by clade I to be diagnosed outside the African continent," the agency said in a statement.

The person was infected during a visit to "the part of Africa where there is a major outbreak of mpox clade I," state epidemiologist Magnus Gisslen said in the statement.

The patient "has received care," Gisslen said. The agency added that Sweden "has a preparedness to diagnose, isolate and treat people with mpox safely."

"The fact that a patient with mpox is treated in the country does not affect the risk to the general population, a risk that the European Center for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) currently considers very low," it said.

The outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo has killed 548 people since the start of the year.

WHO declared the outbreak in the DRC and neighboring countries a public health emergency of international concern on Wednesday.

Formerly called monkeypox, the virus was first discovered in humans in 1970 in what is now the DRC.

It is an infectious disease caused by a virus transmitted to humans by infected animals but can also be passed from human to human through close physical contact.

The disease causes fever, muscular aches and large boil-like skin lesions.

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