



Tuesday September 17th 2024

As you will have seen and heard, mpox (monkey pox) is in the news again. If, like us, you are considering the implications for milk banks here are 2 links to statements of interest: firstly, to the UK Health Security Agency and secondly to the European Directive statement on mpox.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/monkeypox>

<https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/all-topics-z/monkeypox/factsheet-health-professionals>

A few of the most salient pieces of info are pasted below. If anyone has received additional info or advice do please share it.

Human mpox was formerly known as monkeypox. It is a rare disease caused by the monkeypox virus (MPXV). The disease is endemic in some parts of Central and West Africa. Outbreaks outside of the African continent have occurred. You will see reference made to Clade 1 and Clade 11 but for the purposes of milk donation the advice is the same for both.

The principal mode of MPXV transmission is thought to be direct contact with mpox lesions (including during sexual contact, kissing, cuddling or other skin-to-skin contact) or direct contact with objects contaminated with lesions, such as clothing, towels and bed linen. Mpox does not spread easily between people unless there is very close contact. Person-to-person spread may also occur through coughing or sneezing by someone who has mpox when they're close by.

The illness begins with:

- fever
- headache
- muscle aches
- backache
- swollen lymph nodes
- chills
- exhaustion
- joint pain

However, not all people who have mpox experience all of these symptoms.

Within 1 to 5 days after the appearance of fever, a rash develops, often beginning on the face then spreading to other parts of the body including the soles of the feet and palms of the hands.

All potential Substances of Human Origin (SoHO) donors should be carefully interviewed regarding their contacts with infected mpox cases (confirmed or suspected), infected animals, or travel to affected areas.



For travel, the affected areas should include people with a travel history to countries bordering countries affected by Clade I (the newer, more infectious type of mpox), as well as the affected countries themselves. The current list is:

DRC, Republic of Congo, Central African Republic
Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda, Kenya, Cameroon
Gabon, Angola, South Sudan, Tanzania, Zambia

Given the rapid spread of Clade I in the African region, please check the UKHSA mpox pages regularly for any updates to the countries included. Cases of Mpox have also been found in Sweden and Pakistan

The incubation period for mpox is 5 - 21 days (UK info). However EU information suggests that 95% of people with potential infection would manifest symptoms within 16–23 days.

Human milk donation: Exclude from donation anyone who is currently infected with or may be infected with mpox.

it is recommended to defer asymptomatic donors who have been in contact with mpox cases (confirmed or suspected) from SoHO donation, for a minimum of 23 days from the last day of exposure. It should be noted that the available information on the incubation period is based on individuals manifesting symptoms, and the possibility of MPXV transmission by asymptomatic individuals is unknown.

Additional Source: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/clade-1-mpox-virus-infection>

Many thanks to Dr Jim Gray, Consultant Microbiologist at Birmingham Women's and Children's NHS Foundation Trust who kindly checked the above information.

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