

MEDIA STATEMENT

To: Editors & Health Journalists
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Update on mpox outbreak and response efforts

Pretoria: The Department of Health would like to confirm that the country has recorded three more positive cases of mpox (formerly known as monkey pox) and one death as the efforts to curb the spread of this infectious disease are ongoing in the affected communities around the country.

The latest cases/patients include a 40-year-old male from Ladysmith in KwaZulu-Natal who presented with mpox-like symptoms including rash all over his body and never presented in hospital. He passed on at home and the results came back positive for mpox on the 23rd June 2024.

The other two cases were confirmed in Gauteng including a 43-year-old man who was diagnosed on 22 June 2024 at a local private health facility in Johannesburg, and a 29-year-old male diagnosed in Mamelodi health facility on 21 June 2024. They presented with symptoms indicative of disease and had no international travel history.

This brings the total number of laboratory-confirmed cases of mpox in South Africa to 16 since the outbreak of the disease in May 2024. Eight cases from KwaZulu-Natal, seven cases from Gauteng, and one from Western Cape. All cases are males, aged between 23-43 years old. The number of mpox-related deaths has also increased to three.

The department, working with provinces and other stakeholders in the sector, has embarked on health education with funeral parlours on how to handle the human remains of demised due to suspected and confirmed mpox.

The department would like to allay fears of possible travel restrictions or lockdowns due to mpox outbreak because the World Health Organization has not recommended any travel restrictions. However, it is important for travellers from mpox endemic countries to seek health care if they are ill and to alert health officials about their travel for clinical guidance.

Individuals, families and communities are urged to support all those who experience mpox-like symptoms to present at the nearest healthcare facilities without delay for screening and diagnosis, instead of self-diagnosis and using over-the-counter medication.

Anyone can contract mpox regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation and race. Mpox is preventable and manageable, and treatment for both mild and severe cases is available. People at high risk include those living with chronic conditions such as HIV, TB and diabetes.

Breakdown of the cases

Cases	Confirmation	Area/Province	Age	Gender	Hospitalised
Case 1	8 May 2024	Sedibeng, GP	35	Male	Yes
Case 2	21 May 2024	eThekwini, KZN	39	Male	Yes
Case 3	31 May 2024	eThekwini, KZN	30	Male	Yes
Case 4	03 June 2024	eThekwini, KZN	33	Male	Yes
Case 5	07 June 2024	Tembisa, GP *	37	Male	Yes
Case 6	12 June 2024	uMgungundlovu, KZN*	38	Male	Yes
Case 7	13 June 2024	Cape Town, WC	39	Male	Yes
Case 8	14 June 2024	eThekwini, KZN	23	Male	Yes
Case 9	14 June 2024	Johannesburg, GP	27	Male	Yes
Case 10	14 June 2024	Pretoria, GP	30	Male	Yes
Case 11	14 June 2024	Soweto, GP	38	Male	Yes
Case 12	16 June 2024	eThekwini, KZN	28	Male	Yes
Case 13	19 June 2024	eThekwini, KZN	39	Male	Yes
Case 14	21 June 2024	Mamelodi, GP	29	Male	Yes
Case 15	22 June 2024	Johannesburg, GP	43	Male	Yes
Case 16	23 June 2024	Ladysmith, KZN*	40	Male	No

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