

Letter to the Editor

Anthropozoonotic transmission of Monkeypox: Are our canine companions at risk?

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Monkeypox is the latest zoonotic outbreak spreading in its majority throughout the Western region of the globe. The latest statistics and reports indicate that Spain, France, Germany, Portugal and the Netherlands are the country's worst effected with a total of 7083, 3897, 3570, 845 and 1221 cases respectively. The WHO has also reported numerous cases extending into the Balkans and Turkey.¹ The current global Monkeypox outbreak is becoming more concerning as the total number of cases globally has surpassed 35000, and the incident rates are accelerating with a 20% growth in cases being noted on a weekly basis.² This global increase in cases intern enhances exposure of the virus to a larger portion of the populous; the exposure of the virus is not only intensified in humans but also their household pets and animals.

HUMAN-TO-HUMAN TRANSMISSION OF MONKEYPOX

Monkeypox is a zoonotic viral disease and is traditionally believed to be transmitted via Zooanthroponotic transmission (primates to humans). Human to human transmission of the virus is via direct contact, be it skin to skin or face to face inoculation from mucosal lesions. The current 2022 outbreak of Monkeypox is being predominantly transmitted through the sexual route and has therefore been categorized as a sexually transmitted infection. Transmission of the virus occurring principally among homosexual men or men who have sex with men (MSM).³

ANTHROPOZOONOTIC TRANSMISSION OF MONKEYPOX

Anthropozoonotic transmission (human to non-primate) spread of Monkeypox has been a hypothesized possibility throughout this outbreak due to the increased exposure of the virus to non-primate animals as a direct result of the rising global infection rates. A suspected case of Anthropozoonotic transmission (human-to-canine transmission) has been published in The Lancet Medical Journal. The transmission occurred between two homosexual men who were in co-habitation with one another and who both had been infected with the Monkeypox virus. The virus is believed to have been transmitted to the men's pet, a 4-year-old Italian male greyhound which developed numerous mucocutaneous lesions and tested positive for the Monkeypox virus. The viral samples of both men and the dog were sequenced for homology and one of the males had a 100% match with the homology of that sequenced in the dog.^{4,5}

CONCLUSION

It is evident that Anthropozoonotic transmission of the Monkeypox virus is occurring and it is very likely that an increase in such Human-to-pet transmissions will be reported in future. It is thus advised that individuals who test positive for Monkeypox should isolate from their pets to prevent transmission.

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