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August 16, 2022

**Press Release - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Monkeypox cases increase in Idaho. Public health asks residents to take precautions to prevent infection.**

South Central Idaho – The Idaho Department of Health and Welfare reports nine Idaho residents have tested positive for Monkeypox since the first case was reported in July. As cases spread, South Central Public Health District (SCPHD) is asking residents to take precautions and protect their health from this virus.

“One of the most common symptoms of this disease is a rash that leads to bumps on the skin,” said Tanis Maxwell, SCPHD epidemiology manager. “If you have an exposure to someone with monkeypox and develop symptoms call your provider for possible evaluation and testing.”

The skin rash may look like pimples or blisters at first and could show up anywhere on the body including inside the mouth.

Other symptoms may include:

- Fever of at least 100.4°F (38°C)
- Chills
- Swelling of the lymph nodes

The Monkeypox virus is most commonly spread through close contact with the rash or bodily fluids from someone who is contagious. SCPHD encourages all residents to avoid personal contact with anyone who is showing symptoms of this disease. It is also important to avoid contact with any objects that have been used by someone who has monkeypox. This includes soft surfaces, like clothing and sheets, and hard surfaces, like utensils and doorknobs.

Antivirals are available for patients who might have severe disease or develop complications. SCPHD also has a limited number of vaccines available for people who have been exposed to monkeypox and meet other criteria that places them at high risk to come into contact with the disease. If you have been exposed to the disease and believe you may be high risk, please contact your preferred health care provider or SCPHD’s offices to speak with an epidemiologist.

SCPHD has a public health hotline open for residents who have questions about Monkeypox or another public health issue. The hotline is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on all business days and can be accessed at 208-737-1138.

For more information about monkeypox please  
visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/index.html>.