



## Letter to the editor

## A case report of Mpox (Monkeypox) in male traveler

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*Dear Editor,*

Mpox (Monkeypox) virus is a zoonotic Orthopox DNA virus related to the Smallpox virus. Mpox virus was first described in humans in 1970 in the Democratic Republic of Congo [1]. In the 2022 outbreak, there had

been disproportionate number of cases in gay, bisexual and other men who had sex with men, which suggests amplification of transmission through sexual networks [2,3]. The current outbreak also showed unusually common presentation like genital and oral/perioral lesions with possible sexual transmission. In Saudi Arabia up to 27 August 2022, 7



**Fig. 1.** Multiple crusted papules and early vesicle 2mm in diameter over the upper chest (1A); Multiple scattered umbilicated pustule, crusted papules and small pustule 2-3 mm over the back (1B); Vesiculopustule over the dorsum of the hand (1C), and Multiple vesiculopustule over the forearm that appeared on day 3 of admission (1D).

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cases were reported [4]. Here we present a comprehensive description of a travel-related mpox case in a patient in Saudi Arabia.

The patient is a 24-year-old male who visited the emergency room (ER) due to worsening rash on the face and other body parts. The patient reported skin lesions that started in the genital area then after one day, the lesions appeared on the face. Lesions worsened two days later and extended to whole body parts. He also experienced a low-grade fever. Upon seeking medical care, the patient was suspected Chickenpox (VZV). However; the number of lesions increased and he presented to the EMS. The rash began five days prior to presentation. Physical examination revealed multiple umbilicated pox-like facial and genital lesions at the same stage but more of vesicular like in the trunk and few lesions in soles and dorsum of hand (Figs. 1A–D) with palpable lymphadenopathy in the neck and inguinal area. A chest X-ray was normal and liver enzymes were elevated. The other laboratory data were non-significant and STI work up were all negative. The following day, the patient had four skin samples and were sent to the Saudi ministry of health national laboratory for mpox PCR test. Within 24 hours, the PCR result was positive. The patient is single and denied any sexual activity. He traveled in the preceding's three weeks to three different neighboring countries and he reported having had a massage in unlicensed center. The current case report of mpox was in a young man, whose first manifestations were genital ulcers, with subsequent disseminated skin rash and systemic symptoms. The diagnosis of mpox was considered later with increasing skin rash despite the occurrence of mpox in non-endemic countries. One feature of the occurrence of mpox outside Africa is the fact that those patients differ from the classic descriptions of mpox in the West African region, where systemic symptoms occur first followed by the appearance of skin lesions that are commonly monomorphic and follow a centrifugal distribution. The patient described here presented with lesions that appeared first in the genital area then evolved in a centrifugal distribution. The evolution of skin lesions in patients in the 2022 outbreak was different from the classic descriptions of mpox. Most of the cases in the 2022 multi-state outbreak of mpox were men who had sex with men, gay and lesbian [5], however, intimate contact was a risk factor of transmission. Similarly, this patient reported having a massage in unlicensed center and that was the most likely source of infection. In conclusion, this patient had travel-related mpox. His clinical course was mild and recovered without any antiviral therapy.

#### CRediT authorship contribution statement

**Salma AlBahrani:** Conceptualization, Data curation, Writing – original draft. **Ruba AlGarzai:** Conceptualization, Data curation. **Thamir O. AlJunaid:** Writing – review & editing. **Jaffar A. Al-Tawfiq:** Conceptualization, Writing – original draft.

#### Declaration of competing interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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Salma AlBahrani\*

*Infectious Disease Unit, Specialty Internal Medicine, King Fahd Military Medical Complex, Dhahran, College of medicine-Imam Abdulrhaman Bin Faisal University, Dammam, Saudi Arabia*

Ruba AlGarzai

*Internal Medicine Department, Dermatology Unit King Fahd Military Medical Complex, Dhahran, Saudi Arabia*

Thamir O. AlJunaid

*Emergency Department, Imam Abdulrhaman Bin Faisal University, Saudi Arabia*

Jaffar A. Al-Tawfiq

*Infectious Disease Unit, Specialty Internal Medicine, Johns Hopkins Aramco Healthcare, Dhahran, Saudi Arabia*

*Infectious Disease Division, Department of Medicine, Indiana University School of Medicine, Indianapolis, IN, USA*

*Infectious Disease Division, Department of Medicine, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, Baltimore, MD, USA*

*E-mail address: jaffar.tawfiq@jhah.com.*

\* Corresponding author.

*E-mail address: s.albahrani@kfmmc.med.sa (S. AlBahrani).*