

Search

U.S.

World

Tech & Science

Culture

Autos

Rankings

Health

Life

Opinion

Experts

Education

Podcasts

Vantage

About Us

Announcements

Leadership

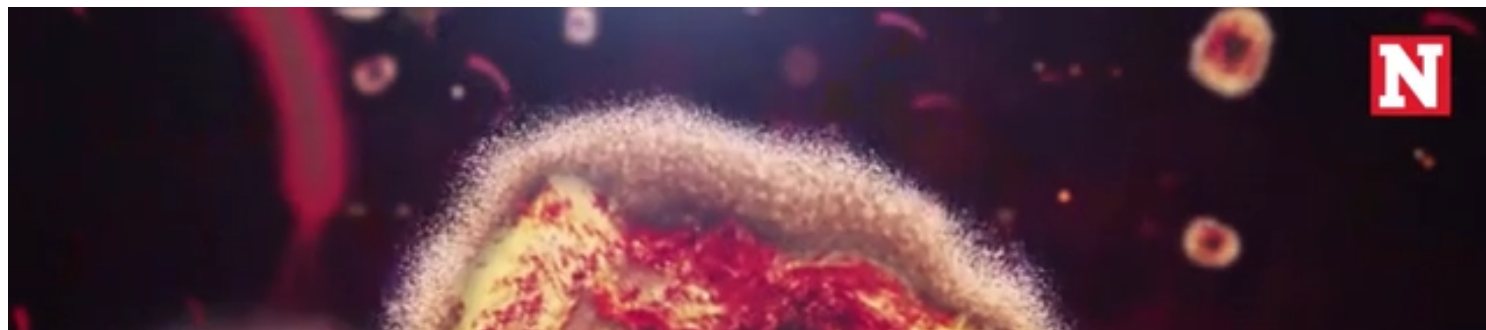
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TECH & SCIENCE

Fauci Says Monkeypox Poses 'Profound Risk' to Children and Pregnant Women

BY **ED BROWNE** ON 7/27/22 AT 4:57 AM EDT



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Top U.S. infectious diseases official Dr. [Anthony Fauci](#) said monkeypox poses "a profound risk" to groups including pregnant women and children, despite most cases so far being among men who have sex with men.

Speaking to [NPR](#) on Tuesday, Fauci stressed it was important to combat stigma when tackling the spread of monkeypox—a virus that had infected more than 19,000 people worldwide in this year's outbreak as of July 26.

Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), said scientists still need to understand exactly how monkeypox is spread and who is most at risk.

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Dr. Anthony Fauci seen speaking at a budget hearing in Washington, D.C. on May 17, 2022. Fauci has highlighted the importance of avoiding stigma associated with monkeypox.

SHAWN THEW/POOL/GETTY

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"We've got to understand the modality of transmission, the manifestations, also the risk for people like children and pregnant women. There's really a profound risk," he said. "Right now, thank goodness, we have a report of only two cases in children, but they're all risk populations."

Much of the focus has been placed on how monkeypox spreads between people, with World Health Organization Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus noting on July 23 that cases so far have been "concentrated" in the MSM community, "especially those with multiple sexual partners."

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However, experts have said that anyone can get monkeypox and that its spread is not limited to sexual contact between men, nor does it spread solely through sexual contact at all.

"It's the close contact that matters, not the sexual activity itself," Rowland Kao, Sir Timothy O'Shea Professor of Veterinary Epidemiology and Data Science at the University of Edinburgh, [told Newsweek last week](#).

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The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ([CDC](#)) states that monkeypox spreads through direct contact with the infectious rash it causes, as well as through prolonged face-to-face contact, contact with contaminated objects, and contact with infected animals. Pregnant women can also spread the virus to their fetus.

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- [Monkeypox Spread Spurs Major WHO Alert as CDC Confirms Cases in Children](#)
- [EU Approves Smallpox Vaccine for Monkeypox as U.S. Jynneos Supplies Run Low](#)

Last week, the CDC confirmed two U.S. cases of monkeypox [in children](#): one toddler who is a resident of California; and one infant who isn't a U.S. resident, but was tested in Washington, D.C.

The CDC said both cases were being investigated, but that they were probably the result of household transmission, [CNN](#) reported.

Elsewhere in his interview with NPR, Fauci was asked how to prevent the stigma

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"You fight the virus," he said. "You don't stigmatize the people who are inflicted with the virus. You reach out to the community. You make it very easy for them to have access to testing, to treatment and to vaccine as opposed to making it a situation where people are afraid to come forward for those types of things."

The U.S. government is continuing to roll out [monkeypox vaccines](#) around the country, particularly to states where monkeypox is prevalent.

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