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First Mandatory Quarantines for Monkeypox as White House Warns of More Cases

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[Belgium](#) has become the first country in the world to introduce a mandatory 21-day [monkeypox](#) quarantine for those who contract the virus after several cases were found, with a White

House official warning Sunday that more U.S. cases are likely.

Those who contract the virus will have to self-isolate, [confirmed](#) Belgian health authorities to [news outlets](#). Individuals who have had close contact with monkeypox cases aren't required to self-isolate but should remain vigilant if they have been in contact with vulnerable people, officials said.

The fourth case was reported in Belgium on Saturday, said Emmanuel Andre, the official in charge of the National Reference lab for COVID-19 in Belgium. "This patient is being treated in Wallonia and is linked to the Antwerp event in which two other

people were infected,” he wrote, referring to a festival that was held in the city earlier this month.

Monkeypox, which originates in Africa, is a virus related to smallpox and symptoms include a bumpy rash, a fever, sore muscles, and a headache. It’s less deadly than smallpox, and health officials have said that its mortality rate is around 4 percent. Experts, however, have expressed concerns about monkeypox’s spread beyond Africa in recent days.

White House officials, including President Joe Biden, said they are worried about the spread of the virus in public remarks issued on Sunday.

“I would not be surprised Martha if we see a few more [monkeypox] cases in the upcoming days,” White House COVID-19 coordinator Ashish Jha [told](#) ABC News on Sunday. “And I think the president’s right, anytime we have an infectious disease outbreak like this, we should all be paying attention.”

But Jha said that the administration is “confident we’re going to be able to get our arms around it ... but we’re going to track it very closely and use the tools we have to make sure that we continue to prevent further spread and take care of the people who get infected.”

In a Saturday update, the World Health Organization (WHO) said there were

92 confirmed cases in 12 different countries, with more under investigation. So far, cases have been confirmed in the United Kingdom, Italy, Sweden, Portugal, Belgium, Germany, France, Spain, the United States, Australia, and Canada.

Dr. Susan Hopkins, one of the top medical advisers to the UK Health Security Agency, warned over the weekend that there is community transmission of the virus in the United Kingdom.

Officials in Belgium and the United Kingdom said that it appears a significant portion of the virus's transmission is among homosexual

males. In statements to local media, Belgian officials said that “we are observing transmissions among men who have sex with men,” and it is a development “that we must study properly to better understand the dynamics.”



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