



DATE: December 1, 2023

TO: State Board of Health Members

FROM: Fermin Leguen, MD, MPH, District Health Officer *FL*

SUBJECT: District Health Officer Report

Mpox Update

The Southern Nevada Health District received reports of seven new cases of mpox in Clark County residents during October. The Health District last reported a case of mpox at the end of August, and reports had been significantly declining at that time.

The first case of mpox, formerly known as monkeypox, was reported in Clark County in June 2022. As of November 7, 2023, the total number of cases reported by the Health District is 304.

The Health District is strongly encouraging mpox vaccinations for people who are eligible, including those who have had contact with someone who has mpox. The readily available two-dose series vaccine is safe and effective at lowering the risk of getting mpox as well as the severity of symptoms if people do get sick. The vaccine can also help prevent mpox if given within 14 days after exposure. Those eligible to get the vaccine include:

- Gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men, transgender or nonbinary people who in the past 6 months have had one of the following:
 - A new diagnosis of one or more sexually transmitted diseases.
 - More than one sex partner.
 - Sex at a commercial sex venue.
 - Sex in association with a large public event in a geographic area where mpox transmission is occurring.
- Sexual partners of people with the risks described above.
- People who anticipate experiencing any of the above.
- People who had close physical contact with someone known or suspected of having mpox in the last 14 days (could include a sexual partner or someone in the household).
- People who have been informed by the Health District that they are a close contact of someone with mpox.

In Clark County, a total of 11,322 mpox vaccines have been administered. Those who have received their first dose of the vaccine should get their second dose 28 days later or as soon as possible if it is past 28 days to receive the maximum protection the vaccine can provide. Health District and community clinic location information is available at www.snhd.info/monkeypox.

The mpox virus is spread through close physical contact with a person who is sick. Although it is less likely, mpox can also be spread by touching objects that have been used by someone with mpox and not disinfected, such as clothing or bedding. In Clark County, the mpox outbreak has mostly impacted the LGBTQ+ community; however, anyone can get mpox. Infections with the virus can cause a rash that may be painful or itchy. Other symptoms can include fever, chills, swollen lymph nodes, exhaustion, muscle aches, headache and respiratory symptoms. A person with mpox may experience all of these or only a few symptoms. More information about mpox is available on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at [CDC | Mpox](#).

Public Health Investigation Update

In September, the Southern Nevada Health District identified that a local supplement manufacturer, Harmonic Innerprizes, sold products made with ingredients that were not food grade and with ingredients from unapproved sources. Subsequent testing of products from the facility found lead at levels that may be a health concern for certain people in three products.

Based on testing results, the products sold under the labels Etherium Gold Focused Brain Powder and Etherium Black Re-action Neutralizer Powder were not safe for persons who are pregnant or able to become pregnant. The product sold under the label Etherium Red Decision Powder may be a health concern for children ages 6 and younger.

Lead poisoning typically occurs from prolonged exposure to lead, originating from environmental, occupational, or contaminated food sources such as food, water or supplements. Symptoms in adults are diverse, ranging from fatigue, headaches and cognitive impairment to high blood pressure, nerve damage, abdominal pain, muscle pain, mood disorders and anemia. Identifying lead poisoning can be challenging, as its symptoms overlap with various health issues. Individuals with known exposure should seek assessment and testing from a health care provider.

While lead screening is not routine for most adults, exceptions exist for certain occupations. During pregnancy, lead toxicity poses risks to both mother and the developing baby. In children, elevated lead levels can severely impact health and developmental milestones. Routine pediatric care typically includes lead screening for children ages 12 months to 6 years, as timely detection is critical to mitigate potential adverse effects.

The facility currently has a suspended health permit. The Health District's Environmental Health Division has placed conditions for reopening the facility, including a requirement of additional training, the hiring of a food safety consultant, ongoing testing and enhanced record keeping and documentation.

More information about lead poisoning is available at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's website at [Lead | ToxFAQs™ | ATSDR \(cdc.gov\)](#) and [Lead FAQs | Lead | CDC](#).

Hispanic Heritage Month

In observance of Hispanic Heritage Month, September 15 to October 15, the Health District paid tribute to the generations of Hispanic Americans who have positively influenced and enriched our nation. During the month, the agency highlighted its programs that create opportunities to improve the health and well-being of Hispanic populations in Southern Nevada.

In Clark County, 24.6% of Hispanic or Latino adults were in fair or poor health in 2021. Among Hispanic adults ages 18 and over in Clark County, approximately 38% had obesity. Diabetes prevalence in Hispanic

adults was slightly higher than that in non-Hispanic white adults ages 18 and over (12% and 11%, respectively). Nearly 12% of Hispanic adults in Clark County smoked cigarettes in 2021. Programs and special opportunities offered during Hispanic Heritage Month to specifically address these issues and improve health outcomes included:

Diabetes Self-Management, Education, and Support classes in Spanish, hosted by the Health District, that provided education and resources to help participants self-manage their type 2 diabetes. The classes were open to anyone with type 2 diabetes as well as people with prediabetes or who are at risk for developing type 2 diabetes. Four classes were held at the Health District's Main Public Health Center, 280 S. Decatur, Las Vegas, NV 89107 in September.

The Health District's Por Mi Por Ti Por Nosotros, Viva Saludable Latinx initiative, offered in partnership with the Mexican Patriotic Committee, supported a tobacco-free lifestyle at the annual Fiestas Patrias event. It was held September 16, at the Sammy Davis Jr. Festival Plaza, 770 Twin Lakes Dr., Las Vegas, NV 89107. The Health District provided cessation resources as well as culturally and linguistically tailored information on the dangers of smoking and vaping. More information about the program is available at www.pormiporti.org.

Additionally, the Health District's Por Mi Por Ti Por Nosotros, Viva Saludable Latinx initiative hosted an 8-week in-person tobacco cessation program in Spanish. Participants were able to develop a personalized plan to help them quit, while obtaining professional support and free nicotine replacement therapy. The group sessions took place at the East Las Vegas Community Center, [250 N. Eastern Ave., Las Vegas, NV 89101](http://www.250NEasternAve.com).

The Health District's [Viva Saludable website](#) has information on a variety of chronic disease prevention and self-management health topics, provided in Spanish.

National Latinx AIDS Awareness Day

The National Latinx AIDS Awareness Day observance is an opportunity to help address the disproportionate impact of HIV on Hispanic/Latinx communities. It is a day to promote HIV testing and effective ways to prevent, treat and stop the transmission of HIV and bring communities together. As part of these activities, the Health District participated in the Southern Nevada Health Consortium's free health fair on October 14, at Chuck Minker Sports Complex. Activities included rapid HIV testing, information on PrEP and PEP, syphilis testing, STD education, substance use resources, vendors and music.

According to the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, in the U.S., approximately 1.2 million people have HIV, with Hispanic/Latino people disproportionately affected. According to the CDC, in 2021, there were an estimated 36,136 new HIV infections. Of the new infections, 29% (10,467) were among Hispanic/Latino people. Issues such as HIV stigma, poverty and limited access to high-quality health care influence health outcomes and drive inequities. More information is available at the CDC's [HIV and Hispanics/Latinos website](#).

National Coming Out Day

The Health District joined with the LGBTQ+ community in observing National Coming Out Day on Wednesday, October 11. The annual observance calls attention to stigmas that affect the LGBTQ+ community, including those associated with HIV. In conjunction with National Coming Out Day, The Health District offered free

HIV tests on October 11, from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at its Fremont Public Health Center, located at 2830 E. Fremont St., Las Vegas, NV 89104. Free condoms, in addition to information about PrEP were also available.

The Health District regularly offers Express HIV testing at no cost Monday through Thursday from 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. at its Sexual Health Clinic, located at 280 S. Decatur Blvd., Las Vegas, NV 89107. Express testing was also available from 8 a.m. – noon and 1 – 4 p.m. on October 11, for symptomatic clients at its All Saints Sexual Health Clinic, located at 4201 W. Washington Ave., Las Vegas, NV 89107. Additional testing was available for syphilis, gonorrhea and chlamydia. More information is available at the [Sexual Health Clinic](#) page on the Health District’s website. Free HIV testing was also available at the Arleen Cooper Clinic at The Center, located at 401 S. Maryland Parkway, Las Vegas, NV 89101. Additionally, the Health District’s Collect2Protect program provided free at-home HIV tests. The kits are available on the [Collect2Protect](#) website and provide a convenient and private testing option.

About 13 percent of the approximately 1.2 million people in the U.S. who have HIV don’t know it and need testing. HIV testing is recommended for everyone between the ages of 13 and 64 at least once as part of their routine health care. Getting tested and learning their HIV status can help keep individuals healthy by either engaging in HIV prevention services or HIV treatment to gain an undetectable status. When a person is considered undetectable, the virus cannot be sexually transmitted to their partners. Those who are HIV-negative can take further control of their sexual health decisions by exploring additional prevention options like PrEP to help maintain their HIV-negative status.

Childhood Obesity Awareness Month

September was Childhood Obesity Awareness Month, and the Health District took the opportunity to raise awareness about childhood obesity and ways to prevent it while also reducing its stigma. For the annual observance, the Health District teamed up with the Partners for a Healthy Nevada Coalition and other community partners to promote healthy behaviors that can reduce the risk of chronic diseases including obesity. A key focus of this effort was the American Academy of Pediatrics 5-2-1-0 guidelines, which entail the following strategies to develop and maintain healthy habits:

- 5 servings of fruits and vegetables daily
- 2 hours or less of recreational screentime daily
- 1 hour of physical activity each day
- 0 sugary beverages each day

In Clark County, 16.5% of high school students have obesity and 17.7% are considered overweight. Statewide, among children entering kindergarten in fall 2019, 11.1% were considered overweight and about one-fifth (21.3%) had obesity. Nationally, 19.3% or 14.4 million children are estimated to have obesity.

As part of Childhood Obesity Awareness Month, the Health District also sponsored the University of Nevada, Reno – Extension’s 11th Annual Healthy Kids Festival on September 30, at the Paradise Recreation Center. The event was geared toward children ages 3-8, and the free family event featured interactive activities from local health, nutrition and physical activity specialists as well as local chefs, food growers and gardening experts.

5-2-1-0 videos, flyers, posters, communication toolkits and other resources are available for download in English and Spanish from the [Get Healthy Clark County](#) or [Viva Saludable](#) websites. The Health District also provides free programs and resources to assist families in adopting a healthier lifestyle. They are available in English and Spanish, and accessible on the [Get Healthy Clark County](#) or [Viva Saludable](#) websites or by calling (702) 759-1270.

International Overdose Awareness Day

Health District staff participated in the Southern Nevada Harm Reduction Alliance (SNHRA) 7th International Overdose Awareness Day event on Thursday, August 31, at the Chuck Minker Sports Complex, located at 275 N. Mojave Rd., Las Vegas, NV 89101. The event was an opportunity to acknowledge the loss of friends and loved ones to fatal drug overdoses, while honoring the families and friends touched by overdoses. The observance also aimed to reduce the stigma of drug-related deaths while raising awareness about overdose prevention and drug policy.

The event was open to the public and included testimonials from community members discussing their overdose-related experiences. A naloxone (Narcan®) training was offered, and participants received overdose prevention kits for no cost provided by the Health District. Information about fentanyl, including fentanyl test strips, was also available, as well as recovery resources, provider booths, a silent auction and free food for attendees.

There were 549 drug overdose deaths among Clark County residents in 2022, an increase of 31.3% from 2019. Opioids (both prescription and illicit) accounted for 60.1% of Clark County drug overdose deaths in 2022. Opioid-related deaths increased by 40.4% in 2022 to 330 deaths, compared to 235 deaths in 2019. In 2022, the 89101 ZIP code had the highest opioid death rate was the highest in the county at 55.4 deaths per 100,000 residents. Fentanyl continues to be a significant public health concern in Clark County and is driving the increase in opioid-related deaths.

SNHRA provides education and resources about reducing substance misuse and unintentional overdose deaths, as well as reducing the risks of acquiring or transmitting bloodborne infections. Each month, the Health District, in conjunction with SNHRA member organizations, provides testing for HIV and hepatitis C, syringe services, overdose prevention, naloxone, fentanyl test strips, substance use disorder linkage to services and homeless services.

New Harm Reduction Vending Machine Location

In honor of International Overdose Awareness Day, the Health District and Impact Exchange also showcased their newest public health vending machine, a key component of an innovative intervention program that minimizes the risks of HIV and hepatitis C transmission. The machine, which provides a variety of harm reduction products geared toward people who use drugs, was unveiled on August 31, at the Health District's Fremont Public Health Center, located at 2830 E. Fremont St., Las Vegas, NV 89104. Each vending machine provides harm reduction resources such as sterile syringe kits, hygiene kits, wound care kits, hormone injection kits, safer sex kits, pregnancy tests and nasal naloxone, all at no cost to clients.

Syringe exchanges are used throughout the United States, providing sterile syringes and other services while encouraging users to return used sharps. The Fremont location is the seventh public health vending machine in Southern Nevada. Similar machines are in other local venues including the Health District's

main public health center, opioid treatment centers, community centers and primary care clinics. The machines are operated by the Trac-B/Impact Exchange Harm Reduction Program, which is the Las Vegas Valley's only syringe services program.

Nasal naloxone and fentanyl test strips are available to the public at the Health District's Decatur Pharmacy and self-collected HIV tests are available by mail via the Collect 2 Protect website at <https://www.southernnevadahealthdistrict.org/programs/collect-2-protect/>

For more information on International Overdose Awareness Day, visit <http://nvoverdoseday.com/>. For more information about SNHRA, visit www.facebook.com/SoNVHarmReductionAlliance/.