

# Scientists say monkeypox moniker is “discriminatory and stigmatizing”

By Faima Bakar | HUFFPOST

(HUFFPOST) - If you’ve been seeing monkeypox in the news recently you might have seen pictures of the condition on darker skin.

Though the virus is now evident in other parts of the world, monkeypox has become synonymous with African countries, which is why a new name is being considered for the condition.

The World Health Organization has said it is looking to rename the virus due to the connotations and assumptions that it is an “African disease.”

It comes after a group of scientists signed a paper stating an “urgent need for a non-discriminatory and non-stigmatizing” moniker used to identify the virus.

The team of 29 ex-

perts are now calling it hMPXV and advocate for a “speedy decision and adoption of a new name.”

The disease was first called monkeypox as it was detected in the lab monkeys in 1958. Though it has been identified in wild monkeys in Africa, rodents are thought to be the cause of infection in humans in endemic regions.

Scientists now say that calling it monkeypox and referring to it as African is “not only inaccurate but also discriminatory and stigmatizing.”

In the paper released last week, the experts wrote: “There is an increasing narrative in the media and among many scientists that the present global outbreak is linked to Africa or

West Africa, or Nigeria.

“Further, the use of geographical labels for strains of MPXV, specifically, references to the 2022 outbreak as belonging to the ‘West African’ or ‘Western African’ clade, strain, or genotype.”

The WHO’s director-general, Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, said the organization is “working with partners and experts from around the world on changing the name of the monkeypox virus, its clades and the disease it causes.”

“We will make announcements about the new names as soon as possible,” he added.

In late May, The Foreign Press Association, Africa, also spoke out against publications and news platforms us-



In this Centers for Disease Control and Prevention handout graphic, symptoms of one of the first known cases of the monkeypox virus are shown on a patient’s hand. GETTY IMAGES VIA GETTY IMAGES

ing pictures of Black skin to show the condition.

In a statement they wrote: “We register our displeasure against media outlets using images of Black people alongside stories of the monkeypox outbreak in North America and the United Kingdom.”

More than 1,000 cases of the monkeypox have been confirmed in countries where the condition is not endemic - roughly double the number reported in the

week prior.

Monkeypox is believed to have been spreading undetected in non-endemic countries for some time, and the WHO has said that the actual number of cases is likely much higher than the confirmed figure.

However, the risk of contracting the virus - which most people recover from within a few weeks - remains low, health officials have said.

In the U.K. - which

has seen the highest number of confirmed cases outside of the nine African countries where monkeypox is endemic - health officials have advised anyone infected with the virus to use condoms for eight weeks after infection, and to abstain from sex while symptomatic. These are precautionary measures, as it is not yet known if the condition can spread through semen or vaginal fluids.

# Netflix and Mo’Nique settle lawsuit over alleged discrimination

by K. Holt | ENGADGET

(ENGADGET) - Netflix has settled a lawsuit from comedian and actor Mo’Nique that accused the company of racial and gender bias. Both parties this week moved to dismiss the suit, which was filed in 2019. “The matter has been amicably resolved,” a representative for Mo’Nique told The Hollywood Reporter.

The two sides started talks over a comedy special in 2017, but Mo’Nique claimed the company low-balled her with an opening offer of \$500,000 for a one-hour show to which Netflix would own the rights. The Oscar-winning performer called for a boycott of Netflix and said the offer was discriminatory, given the eight-figure deals some other comics (such as Chris Rock and Amy Schumer) reportedly received for their Netflix specials.

Netflix walked away from the discussions after Mo’Nique’s assertions. “Once Mo’Nique engaged in protected conduct by



Mo’Nique

[PRNewsFoto/BET Networks/AP Images]

protesting the discriminatory offer, Netflix shut down any further negotiations and refused to negotiate in good-faith consistent with its standard practices,” the suit stated. Netflix argued there were no legal grounds to support the claim that a company declining to negotiate in good faith equates to discrimination or retaliation.

However, the judge presiding over the case determined in 2020 that Mo’Nique may have had a point. “Mo’Nique plausibly alleges that, after she spoke out and called her initial offer discriminatory, Netflix retaliated against her by shutting down its standard practice of negotiating in good faith that typically results in increased monetary compensation beyond the ‘opening offer’ and denying her increased compensation as a result,” Judge Andre Birotte Jr. wrote in a ruling that rejected an attempt by Netflix to dismiss the case.

Engadget has contacted Netflix for comment.

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