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WHO to hold emergency meeting on monkeypox on Friday -sources

By Jennifer Rigby



A logo is pictured at the World Health Organization (WHO) building in Geneva, Switzerland, February 2, 2020. REUTERS/Denis Balibouse



LONDON, May 20 (Reuters) - The World Health Organization is set to hold an emergency meeting to discuss monkeypox on Friday, according to sources close to the U.N. agency.

The committee due to meet is the Strategic and Technical Advisory Group on Infectious Hazards with Pandemic and Epidemic Potential (STAG-IH), which advises WHO on infection risks that could pose a threat to global health.

More than 100 cases of the viral infection, which spreads through close contact and is usually mild, have recently been reported outside the countries in Africa where it is endemic.

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STAG-IH is not the committee within WHO that would suggest that monkeypox be declared a public health emergency of international concern, WHO's highest form of alert, which is currently applied to the COVID-19 pandemic.

It is a group of experts made up of scientists from across the globe, and is chaired by David Heymann, a professor of epidemiology at London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

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Earlier today, a WHO spokesperson told a Geneva press briefing that the agency was working to share information and organise technical meetings on the monkeypox outbreak.

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