

Four in Chigasaki contract dysentery from pet monkey

A pet monkey has infected four people with dysentery in Chigasaki, Kanagawa Prefecture, Health and Welfare Ministry sources said Monday.

Health authorities are trying to determine if the monkey, which comes from Ghana, carried the dysentery bacteria when it was imported or whether it picked it up from some other source.

The sources said a 30-year-old man, diagnosed as having the infection Oct. 26, bought the monkey at a pet shop in Yokohama on Oct. 14.

The man contracted diarrhea two days later. Tests showed that both the man and

the monkey had the same type of dysentery bacteria.

The monkey died Wednesday.

The man's parents and a 28-year-old woman who works in his company all showed traces of the bacteria in tests and have been isolated in an infectious disease ward in Chigasaki.

Health authorities also found the same bacteria present in tests on another monkey from the same pet shop.

The only other recent cases of diarrhea contracted from imported monkeys were in 1974 in Gunma and Kanagawa prefectures, and in Tokyo.

JT 3/11/93