



Prince George's County Health Department
EBOLA: UNDERSTANDING THE FACTS
Frequently Asked Questions

Ebola is a severe, often fatal, viral disease. It is caused by an infection with one of the Ebola virus strains.

HAS EBOLA BEEN IDENTIFIED IN MARYLAND?

To date, the only case of Ebola diagnosed in the United States is in Texas. No cases have been identified in Maryland. Local and state health departments will continue to respond to inquiries from medical providers.



Rushern L. Baker, III
County Executive



DOES EBOLA POSE A SIGNIFICANT RISK IN THE UNITED STATES?

Although the risk of the Ebola virus spreading in the US is low, it is possible that additional cases might be identified in persons who had close contact with the first patient diagnosed in the US or in other travelers. In response, the CDC issued a Health Advisory Alert on October 2, 2014 to highlight the recommendations for healthcare personnel and health officials when evaluating patients for Ebola infection.

HOW IS EBOLA SPREAD FROM PERSON TO PERSON?

The virus is spread by contact with an infected patient's blood or bodily fluids, including saliva, urine, sweat, feces, vomit or semen. It can be spread through contact with clothing/linens contaminated with bodily fluids, contact with some animals, and used needles or syringes.

- The Ebola virus spreads only when someone is exhibiting symptoms
- Individuals that do not have a fever are not contagious and cannot transmit the virus to another person
- Transmission occurs through direct contact with an infected person's bodily fluids

AFTER A PERSON IS INFECTED WITH THE EBOLA VIRUS, HOW SOON DO SYMPTOMS BEGIN?

Ebola signs and symptoms may appear anywhere from 2-21 days after exposure, though 8-10 days is most common. Usually the first sign of Ebola is a high fever (higher than 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit).

WHEN IS SOMEONE ABLE TO SPREAD THE DISEASE TO OTHERS?

Ebola only spreads when a person is sick. He/she must have symptoms to spread the disease to others. After 21 days, if an exposed person does not develop symptoms, he/she will not become sick with Ebola.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I'VE TRAVELED FROM AN EBOLA AFFECTED COUNTRY?

Travelers from Ebola affected countries—Guinea, Liberia, or Sierra Leone, should:

- Self-monitor your health for 21 days from departure from the country including taking your temperature
- If symptoms begin, seek health care immediately

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF EBOLA?

- Fever over 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit
- Weakness
- Severe Headache
- Joint and Muscle Aches
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Stomach Pains
- Lack of Appetite
- Red Eyes
- Skin Rash
- Unexplained bleeding and bruising

WHAT TREATMENT IS AVAILABLE FOR PERSONS INFECTED WITH THE EBOLA VIRUS?

At this time, there is no approved drug or vaccine for Ebola. Supportive therapy includes maintaining oxygen status and blood pressure; balancing the patient's fluids and electrolytes; and treating them for any complicating infections.

HOW DO I PROTECT MYSELF?

- Wash your hands often with soap and water
- Use alcohol-based hand rub on your hands if soap and water are not available
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people
- If you or your child is sick, limit contact by staying at home to keep from infecting others

If someone has symptoms of Ebola and possible exposure, that person should limit contact with others and see a health care provider immediately.

WHERE CAN I LEARN MORE?

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention CDC
<http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/>
- Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
<http://phpa.dhmh.maryland.gov/oideor/sipor/sitepages/ebola.aspx>

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