

Fact Sheet: Ebola

What is Ebola?

Ebola or Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) caused by the *Ebola virus* (EV). The virus is found in some countries in Africa. Ebola was discovered in 1976 near Ebola River in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Since then, small outbreaks have occurred in other African Countries.

What are the symptoms of Ebola Virus Disease?

- Fever > 101.5°F
- Severe headache
- Nausea and vomiting
- Muscle and joint pain
- Abdominal pain
- Unexplained bruising or bleeding

Symptoms usually begin 8 to 10 after exposure EVD.

How is it spread?

Ebola is spread by direct contact (through broken skin or mucous membranes) with blood and body fluids (urine, feces, saliva, vomit, and semen) of a person who is sick with Ebola, or with objects (like needles) that have been contaminated with the virus. Ebola is not spread through the air or by water or, in general, by food; however, in Africa, Ebola may be spread as a result of handling bushmeat (wild animals hunted for food) and contact with infected bats.

Who is most at risk for getting Ebola?

Healthcare providers caring for Ebola patients and family and friends in close contact with Ebola patients are at the highest risk of getting sick because they may come in direct contact with the blood or body fluids of sick patients.

All the people with Ebola, who have been treated in the U.S., were exposed in a country with an outbreak of the disease. Most of them are healthcare workers who got Ebola while treating sick people with EVD.

How is it treated?

No specific vaccine or medicine has been proven to cure Ebola. Signs and symptoms of Ebola are treated as they appear. These include:

- Providing fluids and electrolytes for dehydration
- Maintaining oxygen status and blood pressure
- Treating other infections if they occur

Early diagnosis and treatment of symptoms can save lives and prevent the spread of the disease. Tell your doctor if you have travelled to a country that has had Ebola cases.

How is it prevented?

If you are living in or plan to travel to areas with an Ebola outbreak, you can protect yourself by doing the following:

- Wash hands frequently.
- Avoid contact with blood and body fluids of any person, particularly someone who is sick.
- Do not handle items that may have come in contact with an infected person's blood or body fluids.
- Do not touch the body of someone who has died from Ebola.
- Do not touch bats and nonhuman primates or their blood and body fluids, and do not touch or eat raw meat prepared from these animals.
- Avoid hospitals where Ebola patients are being treated. The U.S. Embassy or consulate is often able to provide advice on medical facilities.
- Seek medical care immediately if you develop fever (temperature of 101.5oF/ 38.6oC) and any of the other following symptoms: headache, muscle pain, diarrhea, vomiting, stomach pain, or unexplained bruising or bleeding.
 - Limit your contact with other people until and when you go to the doctor. Do not travel anywhere else besides a healthcare facility.

This fact sheet is for information only and is not meant to be used for self -diagnosis or as a substitute for consultation with a health care provider. For more information call your health care provider or call Wayne County Public Health at 734-727-7078.

Visit the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention www.cdc.gov