

EBOLA

What is Ebola?

Ebola is one of the diseases known as viral hemorrhagic fevers. These diseases are caused by viruses that lead to high fevers and, in some cases, severe bleeding (hemorrhage). The disease caused by the Ebola virus is particularly dangerous, with a death rate of 50-90 percent.

Ebola is an animal disease that humans get through close contact with the blood, fluids or organs of infected animals. The disease can then be passed from person to person. Ebola outbreaks occur primarily in Central and West Africa.

What are the symptoms of Ebola?

Symptoms:

- Fever
- Severe headache
- Muscle pain
- Weakness
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Stomach pain
- Unexplained hemorrhage (bleeding or bruising)
- Symptoms start from two to 21 days after a person comes in contact with the Ebola virus.
- Ebola cannot be spread by an infected person before they have symptoms of the illness.

How is Ebola spread?

- Ebola is almost always spread through direct contact with the blood, body fluids or excretions of a person sick with Ebola; through objects such as needles contaminated with their infected body fluids; or through direct contact with the body of a victim of Ebola.
- Ebola cannot be spread through the air by coughs or sneezes. The virus cannot be breathed in like a flu virus.
- Ebola cannot be spread by an infected person before they have symptoms of the illness.
- It is possible for those who recover from Ebola to infect others as long as their blood or other body fluids contain the Ebola virus. Blood and fluids can remain infected for several weeks.
- Ebola is not spread through water or in general food.
- For all healthcare workers caring for Ebola patients, PPE with full body coverage is recommended to further reduce the risk of self-contamination. See updated guidance from CDC at: <http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/hcp/procedures-for-ppe.html>

Who is at risk for Ebola?

- For most people, the risk of catching Ebola is extremely low.
- People who care for Ebola patients are at the highest risk because they may come into contact with blood or body fluids.
- People who come into contact with the bodies of Ebola victims are also at risk and should take protective measures to avoid possible infection.

How is Ebola treated?

- Ebola patients are given fluids and lost blood is replaced.
- There is no licensed medication that cures Ebola and no vaccine to prevent it. Several experimental medications are currently being evaluated.
- Ebola patients are isolated to prevent the spread of the disease. Those who come into contact with patients or the bodies of deceased Ebola victims should wear protective clothing, wash their hands often and take other measures to avoid infection.

Is it safe to travel to affected areas?

- It is recommended you don't travel to a country that is experiencing an Ebola outbreak.

If you must travel

If you absolutely must travel to a country experiencing an Ebola outbreak:

- Take protective measures to avoid all travel-related infections.
- Talk with your doctor or a travel medicine clinic if you are planning a trip to areas where outbreaks are occurring.
- Check the CDC's Travelers' Health website for travel notices on specific diseases and countries: see wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices.

If you are experiencing symptoms of Ebola or have come in contact with someone who has Ebola:

- 1) Call your healthcare provider right away. Tell them your symptoms. It is important that you call before showing up at a healthcare facility so they can be prepared for your arrival.
- 2) **You or your health care provider should also immediately call the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) at 303-692-2700.**

For more information, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at:
<http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/>

or the [Colorado Department of Health and Environment](http://www.cdphe.state.co.us)

For general questions the public is encouraged to call the Colorado HELP line at:
303-389-1687.