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Ebola Virus

What is Ebola?

Ebola is a hemorrhagic fever virus caused by the Ebola virus. It affects many of the body's organ systems and often causes severe illness. Symptoms of Ebola most commonly start eight to 10 days after coming into contact with Ebola virus, but can occur as early as two days or up to 21 days after exposure.

What are the symptoms?

Symptoms of Ebola include: fever, headache, joint and muscle aches, weakness, diarrhea, vomiting, stomach pain, lack of appetite and abnormal bleeding.

How is Ebola spread?

Ebola is spread by direct contact with blood or other body fluids (vomit, diarrhea, urine, breast milk, sweat, semen) of an infected person who has symptoms of Ebola or who has recently died from Ebola. It may also be spread through objects or surfaces contaminated with body fluids of a person infected with Ebola virus, such as clothing or bedding.

Ebola is NOT spread through the air or by water, or in general food. However, in Africa, Ebola may be spread as a result of handling bush meat (wild animals hunted for food) and contact with infected bats.

A person infected with Ebola virus cannot pass it to others before any symptoms appear.

Who can spread Ebola to others?

For a person to spread Ebola to others, they must have been in an area within the last 21 days where

For more information, visit www.dhs.wisconsin.gov or www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola

Ebola disease is occurring AND have been in contact with the blood or body fluids (such as vomit, diarrhea, urine, breast milk, sweat, semen) of a person with Ebola or who has died from Ebola AND develop Ebola symptoms.

Who is at risk?

The risk of catching Ebola for the general public is low in the United States. Health care providers or family members caring for a person with Ebola are at highest risk because they may come in contact with blood or body fluids of a diagnosed patient. Ebola is not spread by casual contact.

How can I protect myself?

Avoid non-essential travel to areas affected by the Ebola outbreak. If you are in an affected area:

- Avoid contact with blood and body fluids of those who are ill.
- Do not handle items that have come in contact with an infected person's blood or body fluids.
- Use protective clothing (gloves, gown, masks, eyewear) when caring for sick persons.
- Avoid contact with sick or dead animals and do not eat wild animals or bush meat.
- Avoid funeral or burial rituals that require handling the body.
- Monitor your health for 21 days after leaving the affected area. Seek medical care immediately if you develop symptoms of Ebola.