

# Ebola Virus Disease

## What is Ebola?

Ebola virus disease (also known as Ebola Hemorrhagic Fever) is an illness caused by one of several Ebola Virus strains. Ebola virus disease can be a severe illness with reported mortality rates ranging from 25 to 90 percent depending on the strain.

## What are the symptoms of Ebola?

- Subjective fever or measured temperature
- Severe headache
- Muscle pain
- Weakness
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Abdominal (stomach) pain
- Unexplained hemorrhage (bleeding or bruising)

The average incubation period is 8 to 10 days, but symptoms may appear anywhere from 2 to 21 days after exposure to Ebola.

## How is the Ebola virus spread?

The natural reservoir for Ebola virus is thought to be in wild animals. Humans can get the virus by eating raw meat from an infected animal, or having contact to the blood or fluids of an infected animal. Ebola virus can also be passed from person to person through direct contact to mucous membranes or broken skin with body fluids (blood, vomitus, stool, semen, breast milk, saliva, tears, and sweat) of a person who is sick with Ebola. It can also be transmitted by contact with objects or surfaces contaminated with the virus. A person infected with Ebola cannot pass it to others before symptoms appear.

## Prevention of Ebola infection:

1. Avoid travel to areas affected by an Ebola outbreak
2. If you travel to an Ebola affected area, make sure to do the following to prevent infection:
  - Practice careful hygiene
  - Wash your hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer
  - Do not handle items that may have come in contact with blood or body fluids
  - Avoid funeral or burial rituals that require handling remains from Ebola victims
  - Avoid contact with bats and nonhuman primates or their blood, fluids, or raw meat
  - Avoid hospitals where Ebola patients are being treated
3. Travelers returning from Ebola affected area should monitor your health for 21 days.
  - Call your healthcare provider right away if you or anyone in your travel group gets a fever, headache, vomiting, diarrhea, or joint and muscle aches during this time.
  - Tell them your symptoms and that you traveled to an Ebola affected area, so that you will receive the appropriate level of care right away.
  - Tell your doctor what activities you were involved in and if you had contact with anyone who had Ebola
4. There is no FDA-approved vaccine available for Ebola

## Resources:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Ebola Information: <http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Travelers Health: <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/list>