

Ebola is a severe and often deadly illness. Getting medical care early helps people survive and helps stop its spread. Ebola is also known as Ebola virus disease (EVD).

The virus that causes Ebola was first found in 1976. It has caused outbreaks over the years. The largest outbreak so far began in West Africa in March 2014. Travelers from other countries, including the US, got sick from Ebola after going to West Africa. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) said 9 countries had people sick with Ebola. Over 11,000 people died during the 2014 outbreak.

Health agencies and governments across the world worked together to stop the 2014 Ebola outbreak. People still get Ebola from time to time but as of February 2016, Ebola is under control. Countries that were part of the 2014 outbreak have learned:

- how to watch for Ebola better
- to act quickly if people become sick
- ways to keep the Ebola virus from spreading

HOW IT SPREADS

Ebola spreads between people when broken skin or mucus membranes (the soft, moist areas at the openings of the body) touch:

- body fluids of someone who is sick with or has died from Ebola. Ebola virus can be in blood, spit, pee, poop, tears, sweat, semen, breast milk and other fluids.
- things with body fluids on them from someone who is sick with or died from Ebola (used needles, clothes, bed linens etc.).

Ebola virus has been found in the semen of some men who have had the disease. Because of this, Ebola may also spread through sex. At this time, experts **do not know**:

- how long the virus stays in the semen. It seems that the Ebola virus goes away in time.
- if Ebola is spread from sex or contact with vaginal fluid of women who had Ebola

Ebola does **not** spread through the air, water or food in general. Only a few mammals (humans, monkeys, apes and bats) can get and spread Ebola. In Africa, Ebola may be spread by

- touching infected wild animal meat hunted for food
- contact with infected bats

There has been no sign that Ebola spreads by mosquito or other insect bites

SYMPTOMS

- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| • Fever | • Diarrhea and vomiting |
| • Bad headache | • Stomach pain |
| • Muscle pain | • Skin rash |
| • Weakness | • Bleeding or bruising for no reason |
| • Feeling tired (fatigue) | |

Symptoms of Ebola can start from 2 to 21 days after being exposed to the virus.

TREATMENT

Ebola is treated by treating the symptoms. Getting medical care early helps people survive. It is not known if people who had Ebola can get it again or get another kind of Ebola virus.

PREVENTION

There is not a vaccine approved by the Food and Drug Administration to prevent Ebola as of February 2016.

Public health officials in the US work to protect the public from Ebola. This done by giving facts:

- to the public about the disease and how to prevent it
- about any outbreaks and what is being done to stop them
- to travelers to help protect them in areas of the world where there is Ebola

The CDC and the World Health Organization are still working to prevent new Ebola outbreaks in Africa.

TIPS FOR TRAVELERS

The CDC website lists countries with Ebola outbreaks and other diseases (www.cdc.gov/travel). Be sure to check the web site before making travel plans to any country.

Always tell your doctor where you have traveled in the last six months. You should do this no matter what the reason is for your visit.

Call your doctor or Wake County Human Services (919-250-4462) right away if you:

- were in a country in the last 21 days where Ebola was widespread (Liberia, Guinea, or Sierra Leone) and
- you have fever, diarrhea, vomiting, weakness, fatigue, stomach pain, muscle pain, bleeding or bruising for no reason.

MORE QUESTIONS?

Visit the CDC's Ebola web page at <http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/index.html>.