

EBOLA VIRUS DISEASE (EVD)

What is Ebola?

Ebola virus disease (EVD), also known as Ebola, is a contagious disease caused by a virus. Ebola is a severe disease and fatal in 53% of cases reported in the current Ebola outbreak in West Africa. No cases of Ebola have been identified in Canada, and the risk to Ontarians remains **very low**.

How is Ebola spread?

Ebola can only be spread to others after symptoms begin and it does not spread easily from person to person. The virus is spread through direct contact with:

- a sick person's blood or body fluids (urine, saliva, feces, vomit, and semen);
- objects (e.g., needles) that have been contaminated with infected body fluids; OR
- infected animals.

Ebola cannot spread through the air.

What are the signs and symptoms of Ebola?

Symptoms can appear from 2 to 21 days after exposure and include:

- fever $\geq 38^{\circ}\text{C}$ (100.4°F)
- Severe headache
- diarrhea
- vomiting
- stomach pain
- muscle aches
- Sore throat

Can I get Ebola from a person who is infected but doesn't have any symptoms?

No. Individuals are not infectious prior to becoming symptomatic.

Who is most at risk for Ebola?

Health care workers and the family and friends in close contact with Ebola patients are at the highest risk of getting sick because they may come in contact with infected blood or body fluids.

Is there treatment for Ebola?

There is no approved treatment for Ebola. Ebola patients receive supportive care to treat the symptoms of the disease. There is also no vaccine against Ebola.

I have recently returned from Africa. What should I do?

If you have travelled to **Guinea, Sierra Leone, or Liberia**, in the past 21 days, you should:

- 1) Contact Toronto Public Health or your local health department upon your return
- 2) Check your temperature by mouth twice daily with a thermometer and record the results for 21 days. Do not share oral thermometers.
- 2) If possible, do not take medications that may reduce fever (Tylenol™, Advil™, Aspirin™)
- 3) If you develop a fever of $\geq 38^{\circ}\text{C}$ (101°F) or greater and have symptoms that may suggest Ebola virus disease:
 - Avoid direct contact with others (self-isolate)
 - Call Toronto Public Health at 416-338-7600 (for people who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing call 416-392-0658 for TTY) between 8:30am – 4:30pm Monday to Friday for further advice; or call 3-1-1 after business hours
 - If you seek medical attention, be sure to call the clinic or hospital ahead of time to let them know that you have travelled to a region affected by Ebola
 - Do not take public transportation or a taxi; take a private vehicle or if you are ill call an ambulance and advise them of your travel history and symptoms

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I will be travelling to Africa. What precautions should I take?

The Public Health Agency of Canada recommends that Canadians **avoid all non-essential travel to Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone** due to the Ebola virus outbreak. Visit <http://travel.gc.ca/travelling/advisories> for up-to-date travel advice and advisories.

Cases of Ebola have also been found in the **Democratic Republic of Congo (Equateur Province)**.

If you must travel to any area where Ebola is present, make sure to do the following:

- Consult a health care provider at least six weeks before departure.
- Avoid direct contact with blood and other bodily fluids of people with Ebola or unknown illnesses.
- Avoid contact with objects, such as needles, that have been contaminated with blood or bodily fluids.
- Avoid unprotected sexual activity.
- Practice careful hand hygiene.
- Avoid funerals or burial rituals that require handling the body of someone who has died from Ebola or from an unknown illness.

- Avoid contact with animals and raw or undercooked meat.
- Upon your return, contact Toronto Public Health or your local public health department.
- After you return, monitor your health for 21 days and seek medical care immediately if you develop symptoms of Ebola.

I am a health care worker. What precautions should I take when caring for people with suspected or confirmed Ebola?

Health care workers caring for people with suspected or confirmed Ebola must take precautions to protect themselves. For more information, refer to Public Health Ontario's

["Infection Prevention and Control Guidance for Patients with Suspected or Confirmed Ebola Virus Disease in Ontario Health Care Settings."](#)

For further information:

1. Talk to your doctor
2. Call Toronto Public Health at 416-338-7600 (for people who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing call 416-392-0658 for TTY) between 8:30am – 4:30pm Monday to Friday; or
3. Call 3-1-1 after business hours

RESOURCES

- Public Health Agency of Canada. Ebola Virus Disease. <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/id-mi/vhf-fvh/ebola-eng.php>
- Public Health Ontario. Ebola Virus Disease. <http://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/BrowseByTopic/InfectiousDiseases/Pages/Viral-Hemorrhagic-Fevers.aspx>
- World Health Organization. Ebola Outbreak Update. <http://www.who.int/csr/disease/ebola/en/>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). <http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/>
- Facts About Ebola (CDC): <http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/pdf/infographic.pdf>

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