

MEMO:

Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) Preparedness Kit

To: All family physicians
From: Dr. Faith Stratton, Chief Medical Officer of Health
Date: October 28, 2014

This update is to provide information to family physicians, general practitioners, and medical learners on recent changes to national and provincial Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) screening protocols and provide advice on how to respond to suspected EVD cases.

Current Status of Global Ebola Outbreak:

- The EVD outbreak in West Africa is currently affecting only the countries of Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea.
- Canadian screening protocols have been updated to ensure all travellers who have been in an EVD outbreak area in the last 21 days are screened before entering Canada.

For family physicians practicing in community-based facilities the likelihood of encountering an Ebola patient is very low; however, it is important to be vigilant, have knowledge of the symptoms of Ebola and follow the advice included in this kit.

Ebola

Virus Disease Preparedness Directive

What to do if a potential Ebola patient presents in your clinic

If a patient presents in your clinic and identifies as a potential Ebola Virus Disease patient, clinicians and support staff should be prepared to ask the following three questions:

1. Have you travelled to an area of West Africa (Guinea, Liberia, or Sierra Leone) affected by Ebola Virus Disease in the past three weeks (**21 days**)?
2. Have you been in close contact with anyone else who has travelled to one of these countries in the past three weeks (**21 days**)? If so, was that person sick?
3. Are you currently being monitored as a contact of someone with Ebola Virus Disease, or have you been advised to monitor your temperature or other symptoms?

If the suspected Ebola patient responds yes to any of the above questions immediately contact the Medical Officer of Health (MOH) on call at **1-866-270-7437**.

If a patient presents in your workplace who has been in Guinea, Liberia, or Sierra Leone in the last 21 days and has symptoms that indicate a diagnosis of Ebola Virus Disease, health care workers should immediately:

1. Implement contact and droplet infection control precautions
2. Isolate the patient in an area separated from the general public
3. Avoid any direct contact with the patient – maintain a distance of at least two meters
4. Notify the Medical Officer of Health on Call at **1-866-270-7437**. The MOH will review the patient information with you and provide guidance.

It is important that front line staff, including medical office assistants, who may field calls from patients with an appropriate travel history are trained to advise these patients to call the Healthline at 1-888-709-2929 before visiting any health care facility. The Healthline has trained registered nurses able to interview the patient and where necessary contact the MOH for guidance.

If the Medical Officer of Health determines that the patient is a suspect case, the MOH will notify the Medical Communications Centre and they will arrange to transport the patient to the Health Sciences Center (HSC) in St. John's.

For physicians practicing in community-based facilities the likelihood of encountering an Ebola patient is very low; however, it is important to be vigilant and have knowledge of the symptoms of EVD.

What are the symptoms of Ebola?

Symptoms can begin up to **21** days after exposure.

Initial symptoms include:

- ✓ sore throat
- ✓ fever
- ✓ chills
- ✓ headache
- ✓ muscle pain and weakness

Additional symptoms may include:

- ✓ rash
- ✓ nausea, vomiting and diarrhea
- ✓ haemorrhaging (bleeding from inside and outside the body)

Symptoms of EVD are similar to those of other viral haemorrhagic fevers, such as Marburg, and of infectious diseases like malaria or typhoid. Diagnosis can be difficult, especially if only a single case is involved.

Some people who get infected with the Ebola virus are able to recover, although, according to the World Health Organization and, based on previous outbreaks, up to 90% of those infected with Ebola may die.

If an individual presents in your clinic and identifies as a potential Ebola Virus Disease patient, family physicians should be prepared to ask the following three questions:

1. Have you travelled to an area of West Africa (**Guinea, Liberia, or Sierra Leone**) affected by Ebola Virus Disease in the past three weeks (**21 days**)?
2. Have you been in close contact with anyone else who has travelled to one of these countries in the past three weeks (**21 days**)? If so, was that person sick?
3. Are you currently being monitored as a contact of someone with Ebola Virus Disease, or have you been advised to monitor your temperature or other symptoms?

If the suspected Ebola patient responds **yes to any of these questions**

immediately contact the Medical Officer of Health (MOH) on call at **1-866-270-7437**

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Have **YOU** travelled from Africa recently?



There are EBOLA outbreaks
in the African countries of:
Sierra Leone, Guinea and Liberia.

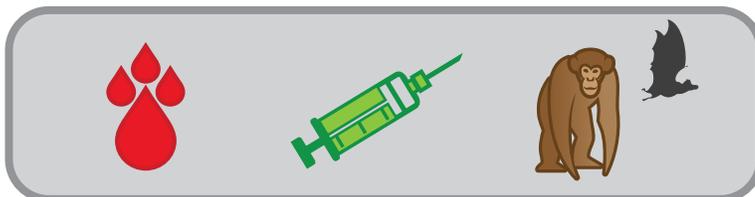
The risk of
EBOLA in Canada
is **VERY LOW**



You can only get EBOLA
if you have touched



You cannot get EBOLA
from the **AIR**



What to do if you feel sick

If you feel sick and were
in Africa in the last **21** days,
call Healthline 1-888-709-2929
as soon as possible.



Tell them:

- ✓ Your symptoms
- ✓ Which countries you visited or travelled from, and
- ✓ Whether you have been to a medical facility or received medical care while abroad.

For more information: www.publichealth.gc.ca



Public Health
Agency of Canada

Agence de la santé
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Newfoundland
Labrador