

Ebola

Your questions answered

What is Ebola?

Ebola is a serious, often deadly disease, mostly found in West Africa, caused by a virus that can occur in humans and some animals. Symptoms of Ebola usually appear 8-10 days after coming into contact with body fluids of someone infected with Ebola who is showing symptoms, but can appear up to 21 days after exposure.

Symptoms include:

- Fever
- Headache
- Joint and muscle aches
- Weakness
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Stomach Pain
- Lack of appetite
- Abnormal bleeding

How do people get Ebola?

Ebola is spread by direct contact with body fluids (blood, vomit, urine, sweat, breast milk, saliva, feces, tears, mucus, semen) of someone infected with Ebola and is showing symptoms or someone who has recently died of Ebola. Ebola can only be spread from one person to another when the person infected with Ebola is showing symptoms.

Can I get Ebola through the air?

No. Ebola is not a respiratory disease like the flu, so it is not transmitted through the air.

Can I get Ebola from food or water?

No. Ebola is not a food-borne illness. It is not a water-borne illness.

Who can spread Ebola to others?

For a person to spread Ebola to others, they must have:

- Been in areas within the last 21 days where Ebola disease is occurring, AND
- Been in contact with the body fluids of a person with Ebola who is showing symptoms or a person who has recently died from Ebola, AND
- Developed Ebola symptoms.

What Can **YOU** Do?

Who is at risk? Health care providers caring for Ebola patients 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 of sick patients.

Health care providers should be alert for and evaluate any patients suspected of having Ebola, especially those patients who have traveled to/from a country where an Ebola virus outbreak is occurring. Those countries include: Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. For travel health notices, visit cdc.gov/travel.

How is Ebola treated? There is no specific medication that cures Ebola and no vaccine to prevent it. Treatment of an Ebola patient is supportive, meaning providing fluids, maintaining blood pressure, and providing blood transfusions as needed.

What would Kansas do if there was a case of Ebola? Health care workers in Kansas are on alert to identify people who have traveled to the West African countries where the Ebola outbreak is occurring and who are showing symptoms of Ebola. All hospitals in Kansas are equipped with the standardized and effective infection control measures required to control and contain Ebola. If you think you may have Ebola, it is **IMPORTANT** to **CALL** a hospital or health department and they will provide guidance. Do not show up in a building before notifying a health care professional.

Is it safe to travel overseas? Yes, it is safe to travel overseas. If you are planning on traveling outside the United States, check the CDC's Travelers' Health website for updates on travel notices: cdc.gov/travel.

Need more information? Information about Ebola virus disease can be found on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website: cdc.gov/ebola. Questions can be sent to the Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department by email to ebola@ldchealth.org or the Kansas Department of Health and Environment at response2014@kdheks.gov.

UPDATED 10/17/14 This fact sheet is for information only and is not intended for self-diagnosis or as a substitute for consultation. If you have any questions about the disease described above or think that you may have an infection, consult with your health care provider.

For more information about Ebola,
call the Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department
at **785-843-0721** or visit our website: ldchealth.org