

EBOLA

Ebola virus disease (EVD) is a rare but severe, often fatal illness in humans. Ebola is introduced into the human population through close contact with the blood, secretions, organs or other bodily fluids of infected animals such as fruit bats, chimpanzees, gorillas, monkeys or forest antelope.

KEY FACTS

Ebola:

- Ebola virus disease (EVD), formerly known as Ebola haemorrhagic fever, is a rare but severe, often fatal illness in humans. The average EVD case fatality rate is around 50%;
- virus is transmitted to people from wild animals and spreads in the human population through human-to-human transmission.
- Community engagement is key to successfully controlling outbreaks.
- Vaccines to protect against Ebola are under development and have been used to help control the spread of Ebola outbreaks in Guinea and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has recently approved the Ebola vaccine rVSV-ZEBOV (tradename "Ervebo"). This single dose vaccine regimen has been found to be safe and protective against only the Zaire ebolavirus species of ebolavirus.
- Early supportive care with rehydration and symptomatic treatment improves survival.
- There is no cure or specific treatment for the Ebola virus disease that is currently approved for market, although various experimental treatments are under development.

HEALTH RISKS

- The Ebola virus causes an acute, serious illness which is often fatal if untreated. The average EVD case fatality rate is around 50%.



- Early supportive care with rehydration, symptomatic treatment improves survival.
- Pregnant and breastfeeding women with Ebola should be offered early supportive care

SYMPTOMS

- The incubation period, that is, the time interval from infection with the virus to onset of symptoms, is from 2 to 21 days. A person infected with Ebola cannot spread the disease until they develop symptoms.
- The early Symptoms which can be sudden – include fever, fatigue, muscle pain, headache and sore throat.
- Ebola virus disease symptoms that follows – include vomiting, diarrhoea body rash and in cases some both internal and external bleeding like oozing from the gums, or blood in the stools.
- In some cases there could be symptoms of impaired kidney and liver function.

TREATMENT

There is no cure or specific treatment for Ebola virus. Treatment is directed primarily at relieving the symptoms and when used early, basic interventions can significantly improve the chances of survival. If you think you are infected by Ebola virus:

- Drink plenty of fluids to prevent dehydration. If you're currently abroad, only drink bottled water from a bottle that was properly sealed.
- Take medicine such as acetaminophen or paracetamol to reduce fever and pain.
- Do not take aspirin and other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs to reduce the risk of bleeding.
- Once Ebola diagnosis is confirmed, visit medical facility as intravenous infusion and oxygen therapy might be needed to maintain oxygen status.

PREVENTION

- Community engagement to raise awareness of risk factors for Ebola is an effective way to reduce human transmission.
- Reducing the risk of wildlife-to-human transmission from contact with infected fruit bats, monkeys, apes, forest antelope or porcupines and the consumption of their raw meat.
- Reducing the risk of human-to-human transmission from direct or close contact with people with Ebola symptoms, particularly with their bodily fluids.

- Reducing the risk of possible sexual transmission, WHO recommends that male survivors of EVD practice safer sex and hygiene for 12 months from onset of symptoms or until their semen tests negative twice for Ebola virus.
- Vaccines to protect against Ebola are under development. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has recently approved the Ebola vaccine rVSV-ZEBOV (tradename "Ervebo"). This single dose vaccine regimen has been found to be safe and protective against only the Zaire ebolavirus species of ebolavirus.

Additional health information to transport workers who travels in between countries

Ebola virus is predominantly present in sub-Saharan Africa. Many transport workers travel beyond national boundaries. If you are in one of the country in sub Saharan Africa, you need to be extra careful and protect yourself.

As medical advancement is always happening the ITF will periodically update this information, as necessary. You can also keep yourself updated on Ebola infection from WHO website at:

<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/ebola-virus-disease>



ITF Seafarers
Your port of call online

Contact us by email or Facebook

Email: wellbeing@itf.org.uk

Facebook: @itfwellbeing