

Ebola

Frequently Asked Questions



What is Ebola?

Ebola is a severe, often fatal, viral hemorrhagic disease caused by the Ebola virus.

Where is Ebola occurring?

The current Ebola outbreak is centered in three countries in West Africa: Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone, although other countries may also get cases in the future.* Ebola does not pose a significant risk in the U.S.

What are the symptoms?

Symptoms can include:

- Fever
- Headache
- Joint and Muscle Aches
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Stomach Pain
- Lack of Appetite
- Abnormal Bleeding

How does Ebola spread?

It is spread through direct contact with the blood or other bodily fluids of a sick person. Ebola can also be spread through funeral rites that involve touching the body of a person who died of Ebola. It is not spread through food, water, or the air.

If I have traveled to one of the affected countries, am I at risk of getting Ebola?

You cannot get Ebola from a person unless they have symptoms of disease. Travelers are at risk only if they provided medical care or participated in a funeral rite of a person who was sick from Ebola, without taking special precautions.

What should I do to make sure I don't have Ebola?

If you returned from travel less than 21 days ago and are not sick, you should take your temperature two times a day to check for signs of a fever. If you get a fever >101 degrees, you should call your healthcare provider for advice. If you returned over 21 days ago, you are not at risk of getting sick from Ebola.

How is Ebola prevented?

People can protect themselves from Ebola through avoiding travel to Ebola-affected countries.* CDC recommends that only essential personnel (health care workers and humanitarian aid workers) travel to affected countries. If you must travel to an Ebola-affected country:

- Practice good hygiene.
- Avoid contact with blood and body fluids.
- Do not touch items that may have contacted blood or body fluids from a sick person.
- Avoid funeral or burial rituals that involve touching the body of someone who died from Ebola.
- Avoid contact with animals and raw meat (including bushmeat).
- Avoid hospitals that are treating patients with Ebola.

*An updated list of affected countries is available at: <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices>

For more information, contact your doctor, refer to <http://www.phila.gov/Health/>, or contact the Philadelphia Department of Public Health, Division of Disease Control at 215-685-6740