



THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA
MINISTRY OF HEALTH

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT **EBOLA**



World Health
Organization



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

unicef 
for every child

Report all suspected cases to the nearest health facility immediately.

For further information send a **FREE SMS** to Ureport on: **8500** or call toll free on: **0800 100066**



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Ebola and Human Transmission

1. What is Ebola?

Ebola is a serious and often deadly disease caused by a virus. Ebola virus is spread by contact with bats and monkeys and by contact with a person infected by the Ebola virus. Ebola spreads quickly from person to person, kills in a short time **BUT** can be prevented. With early medical treatment and/or vaccination the death rate can be significantly reduced.

2. What are the signs and symptoms of Ebola?

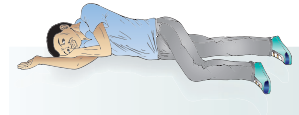
A person suffering from Ebola presents the following signs and symptoms:



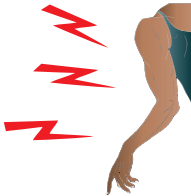
Sudden onset of fever



Headache



Intense body weakness



Muscle pain



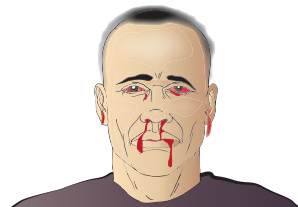
Sore throat



Vomiting



Bloody diarrhoea or urine

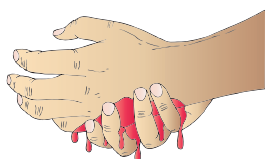


Bleeding from body openings, e.g. mouth, eyes, nose, ears, anus

It is important to note that a person is contagious only when they begin to have one or more signs of the disease.

3. How is Ebola spread?

- Ebola is spread through direct physical contact with body fluids like blood, saliva, stool, vomit, urine and sweat of an infected person or animal



Blood



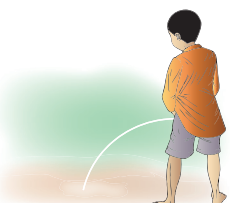
Saliva



Stool



Vomit

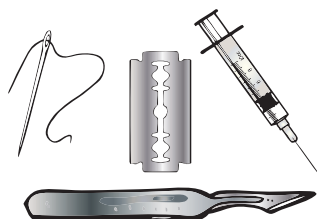


Urine



Sweat

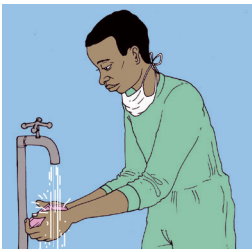
- It can also be spread through using skin piercing instruments that have been used by an infected person.



- Ebola can also be got through contact with persons or animals that have died from Ebola.

4. How can one protect oneself from Ebola?

- Persons who are suspected to have died from Ebola must be buried immediately, by a trained burial team to prevent the spread of Ebola.



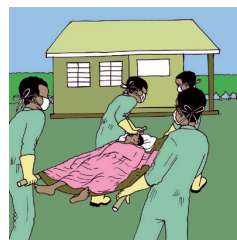
- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and clean water after handling a patient infected with Ebola or the body of a person who has died from Ebola.

- Avoid communal washing of hands during funeral rites.



- Disinfect the bedding and clothing of any person suspected to have died from Ebola with JIK.

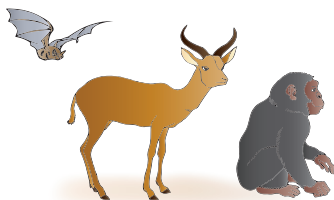
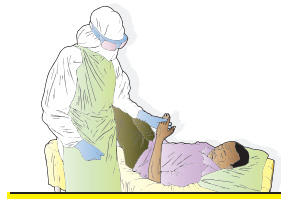
- Persons suspected to be suffering from Ebola should be taken to the nearest health facility immediately.





- Avoid direct contact with body fluids of a person suspected to be suffering from Ebola by using protective materials e.g. gloves and masks.

- Persons handling the body of a person who is suspected to have died of Ebola should wear strong protective materials like gloves and masks.



- Avoid contact or eating bush meat especially from monkeys, bats, baboons, gorillas and chimpanzees

5. Is an infected person contagious even if symptoms have not appeared?

A person infected with Ebola is not contagious before the symptoms appear. The incubation period is 2 to 21 days.

6. Can a person with Ebola survive?

Yes, the chances of survival increase significantly if an infected person seeks medical treatment.

7. If a person infected with Ebola survives, is she/he contagious?

No, before returning home, Ebola patients **WILL** have their blood tested in the laboratory to ensure the virus is no longer in their body. However, people who have recovered from the illness should **NOT** have sex for at least three (3) months unless they use condoms.

8. Can Ebola be transmitted by saliva?

Yes. The Ebola Virus can be transmitted by saliva and other bodily fluids such as blood, faeces, urine, semen, vaginal secretions as well as a runny nose. When these fluids get in contact with broken skin, the eyes, or the mouth of other people, they can get the Ebola virus.

9. Can Ebola be transmitted by sweat?

Yes. Any body fluids of an infected person including sweat have the Ebola virus.

10. Can Ebola be transmitted by shaking hands?

Yes, shaking hands with a person infected with Ebola transmits the disease.

11. How should I greet people, if a hand shake is not recommended?

Hand shaking should be avoided as it is a risk during an Ebola outbreak or before a potential outbreak. You can greet people by waving to them or acknowledge by shaking your head. It is very important to wash your hands with soap and clean water regularly and thoroughly.

12. What distance do I need to keep away from people suspected of having Ebola?

Specific distance does not matter. Ebola is transmitted by contact with body fluids from an infected person. However, if you know any person suspected of having Ebola, please report to the nearest health facility immediately and listen to the advice from the health workers. Avoid touching and handling objects that have been used by a person suspected of having Ebola.

Ebola and animal transmission

13. Why should I not eat bush-meat?

Do not eat bush-meat during an Ebola outbreak. Wild animals are the source of the Ebola virus. Monkeys, baboons, gorillas, chimpanzees, bats or all dead animals found in the bush must **NOT** be touched or eaten.

14. If bush-meat is well cooked, is it safe?

No, because during the hunting, slaughtering and preparing of bush-meat people are exposed to the Ebola Virus. That is how the transmission occurs and why people should avoid bush-meat.

15. Can I eat smoked bush meat?

No, because during the hunting, slaughtering and preparing of bush-meat people are exposed to the Ebola Virus. That is how the transmission occurs and why people should avoid bush-meat.

16. Do I need to avoid all bush-meat or just monkey and bat meat?

During an Ebola outbreak, avoid all bush-meat because it is very dangerous and can infect you with Ebola.

17. Can Ebola be in chickens, goats or cows?

No. There is no evidence linking Ebola and domestic animals such as chickens, goats and cows. It is only bush-meat that is dangerous.

18. Should I stop eating fish too?

No, fish is very safe. There is no evidence linking Ebola and fish

19. Can I get Ebola through contact with urine and droppings of bats?

Yes, bats are a carrier of the Ebola Virus. You can get Ebola if you are in contact with urine and/or droppings of infected bats. Avoid contact with bats and their body fluids including droppings before and during an Ebola outbreak.

20. During the rainy season, there are many bats and they feed on mangoes. Do I stop eating mangoes?

No, you can continue eating mangoes but wash them before eating. Do not eat mangoes that have been bitten by bats.

Treatment of Ebola

21. What do I do if I think I have Ebola?

You must go immediately to the nearest health facility for assessment and treatment.

22. Where can I buy medicine to treat Ebola?

There is currently no medicine or vaccine on sale for Ebola. Go to the nearest health facility immediately for early treatment if you think you have Ebola. Your chances of survival and recovery are much higher if you seek early treatment and care from qualified health workers.

23. I have heard that people are injected and killed at the health facility. Is this true?

That is a false rumor. Although people do die from Ebola some patients recover. Chances of survival are greater the earlier treatment begins. All Ebola patients receive the best medical care and treatment possible. The medical team is working hard to save their patients and to have them returned to their families. At the health facility, the medical team treats Ebola by:

- Vaccination
- Lowering the fever
- Reducing the Pain
- Providing good nutrition
- Rehydration
- Infection control

24. Is it true that a mix of ginger, honey, garlic, onion and vinegar can cure Ebola?

No, it is not true. There is no home remedy but there is treatment and vaccination for Ebola. You must go to the nearest health facility immediately for proper management and treatment if you or someone you suspect has Ebola. Your chances for survival are much higher at a treatment center than at home.

25. We have heard that drinking alcohol prevents Ebola virus transmission. Is this true?

No, it is not true. Alcohol does not prevent Ebola. In fact, excessive consumption of alcohol is harmful to your body.

26. Is it true that Ebola is a curse?

No, it is not true. Ebola is a viral disease transmitted to humans from wild animals. It can also be spread from an infected person to another person.

Reporting

27. Can I call a hotline or send an SMS to report suspected cases of Ebola?

Yes, call toll free on 0800 100066 or send a FREE SMS to Ureport on 8500 to report any suspected case of Ebola. You can get more information on Ebola on these numbers. You should also report any suspected case to the nearest health facility immediately.

28. How effective is the surveillance system in Uganda?

There is an effective surveillance system in place that can identify any suspected Ebola case occurring anywhere in the country. The country also has capacity to test for Ebola virus at the Virus Research Institute in Entebbe.

29. Can I care for a suspected person with Ebola at home?

No, you are endangering the lives of your loved ones, your own life and those of the community, because the disease can easily spread from one person to another. Persons infected with Ebola must be treated/cared for at the health facility/hospital

Government Response

28. What system has the Government put in place to screen people entering Uganda?

The Ministry of Health is working on distributing assessment questionnaires to all travelers entering Uganda. Health Officers at the points of official entrance in Uganda have been trained on Ebola and are able to identify any suspicious cases on arrival.

30. What plans does the Government have to send information about Ebola to the rural population?

The Government has conducted sensitization meetings with religious leaders, school authorities and community based organizations. Thus, information will be provided to the rural population from numerous sources. Communication materials such as posters, leaflets and fact sheets have also been developed and disseminated nationwide. TV, Radio and SMS will also be used to reach rural communities. The Government of Uganda is supported in these activities by international and national health organizations and partners.

30. Does the Government plan to close the border with the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)?

No. Currently, there is no plan for closing the borders. The Government is conducting weekly teleconferences with DRC to exchange Ebola information and for better coordination. Closing the border with DRC might be dangerous as it might lead to the increase in the use of illegal entry points that would defeat efforts to screen people entering Uganda.

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