

W& J College Ebola Information Page – Fall 2014

Several W&J community members have made inquiries about some information about Ebola. Student Health Services can assist with additional information.

BASIC INFORMATION

How great is the risk that I will contract Ebola?

This risk is very small! As you'll see below, there are identifiable risk factors, and generally the risk for the US public at large is limited. The risk is increased for health care workers caring for Ebola patients and for those who have been in contact with infected persons or animals.

Who is at risk?

Only people who have been in contact with persons or animals actively infected with the virus or with their bodily fluids are at risk.

How is it spread?

Ebola is spread by contact with the bodily fluids of an infected person. If these bodily fluids contact the eyes, nose, mucus membranes, or broken skin the risk is increased.

Where is Ebola a concern in the US?

The only currently infected individuals in the U.S. are in quarantine in medical facilities. Rumors that there are infected persons in Ohio are untrue. There are some Ohio residents in quarantine, or in varying levels of monitoring, but none of those individuals have shown symptoms of active infection at this time.

What are the symptoms?

- Fever
- Severe headache
- Muscle pain
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Stomach pain
- Unexplained bleeding or bruising

What to do if I think I or another person may have Ebola?

If the person has a fever.

AND

If they have additional symptoms such as severe headache, muscle pain, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain, or unexplained bleeding.

AND

- In the past three weeks before onset of symptoms, has the individual:
 - o Traveled to West Africa – specifically Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone?
 - o Been in contact with the blood or body fluids of a person known to have or suspected to have Ebola?
 - o Attended funeral proceedings for a person suspected or known to have died of Ebola?
 - o Handled bats or non-human primates (monkeys, gorillas or chimpanzees) originating from disease-endemic areas?

If the above information applies to yourself or an individual you are concerned about, call your closest health care provider. Make sure you *call* the doctor's office or emergency room *before going* and tell them about your recent travel or exposure, and symptoms so that arrangements can be made, if needed, to prevent others from becoming sick. If you have concerns please call Student Health Services at (724) 223-6047.

Is Ebola survivable?

While Ebola is a very difficult disease to treat, the answer to this question for many individuals is "Yes." With early supportive medical care a person's odds of surviving are definitely better. And research and advancements in treatment are currently being made.

How can I protect myself against Ebola?

If you are in a high risk area, you can protect yourself by doing the following:

- Washing hands frequently
- Avoiding contact with anyone's blood and body fluids – particularly someone who is sick
- Avoiding West African hospitals where Ebola patients are being treated
- Not handling items that may contain an infected person's blood or body fluids
- Not touching the body of someone who has died from Ebola
- Not touching bats, monkeys, gorillas or chimpanzees or their blood and fluids
- Not eating "bushmeat" (wild animals that are hunted for food)
- Seeking medical care immediately if you develop Ebola symptoms

*It should be noted that CDC advises against non-essential travel.

<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices>.

For more information, visit the Pennsylvania Department of Health Website at:

http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/department_of_health_home/17457

Or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at:

<http://www.cdc.gov/>