What You Need to Know about Ebola

The largest Ebola outbreak in history

The 2014 Ebola epidemic has affected multiple countries in West Africa. Two imported cases, including one death, and two locally acquired cases in healthcare workers were previously reported in the United States.

CDC and partners are taking precautions to prevent additional cases of Ebola in the United States.

A person infected with Ebola is not contagious until symptoms begin

The time from exposure to when signs or symptoms of the disease appear (the incubation period) is 2 to 21 days, but the average time is 8 to 10 days. Signs of Ebola include fever and symptoms like severe headache, fatigue, muscle pain, vomiting, diarrhea, stomach pain, or unexplained bleeding or bruising.

Ebola is spread through direct contact with blood and body fluids

Ebola is spread through **direct contact** (through broken skin or mucous membranes) with

- Blood and body fluids (like urine, feces, saliva, vomit, sweat, and semen) of a person who is sick with Ebola.
- Objects (like needles) that have been contaminated with the blood or body fluids of a person sick with Ebola.

Ebola is **not** spread through the air, water, or food.

Protect yourself against Ebola

There is no FDA-approved vaccine available for Ebola. Experimental vaccines and treatments for Ebola are under development, but they have not yet been fully tested for safety or effectiveness.

- **DO** wash your hands often with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Do **NOT** touch the blood or body fluids (like urine, feces, saliva, vomit, sweat, and semen) of people who are sick.
- Do **NOT** handle items that may have come in contact with a sick person's blood or body fluids, like clothes, bedding, needles, or medical equipment.
- Do **NOT** touch the body of someone who has died of Ebola.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Office of the Director

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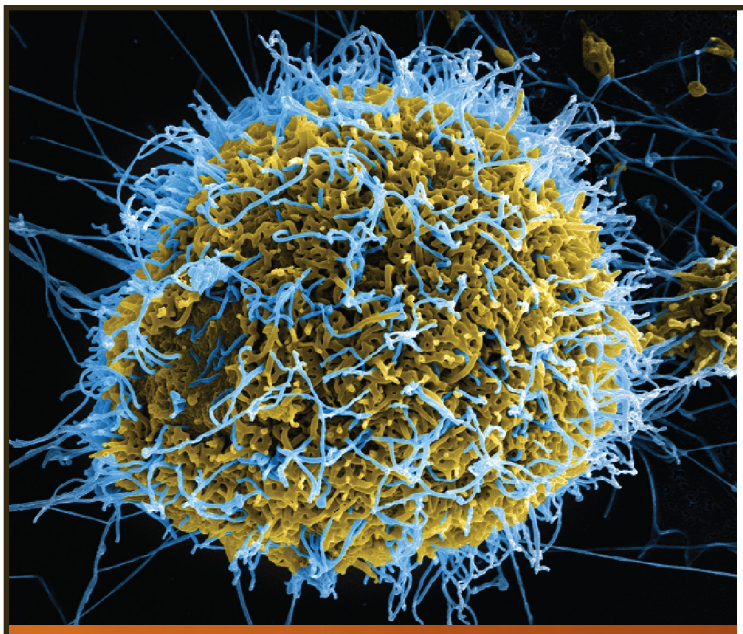

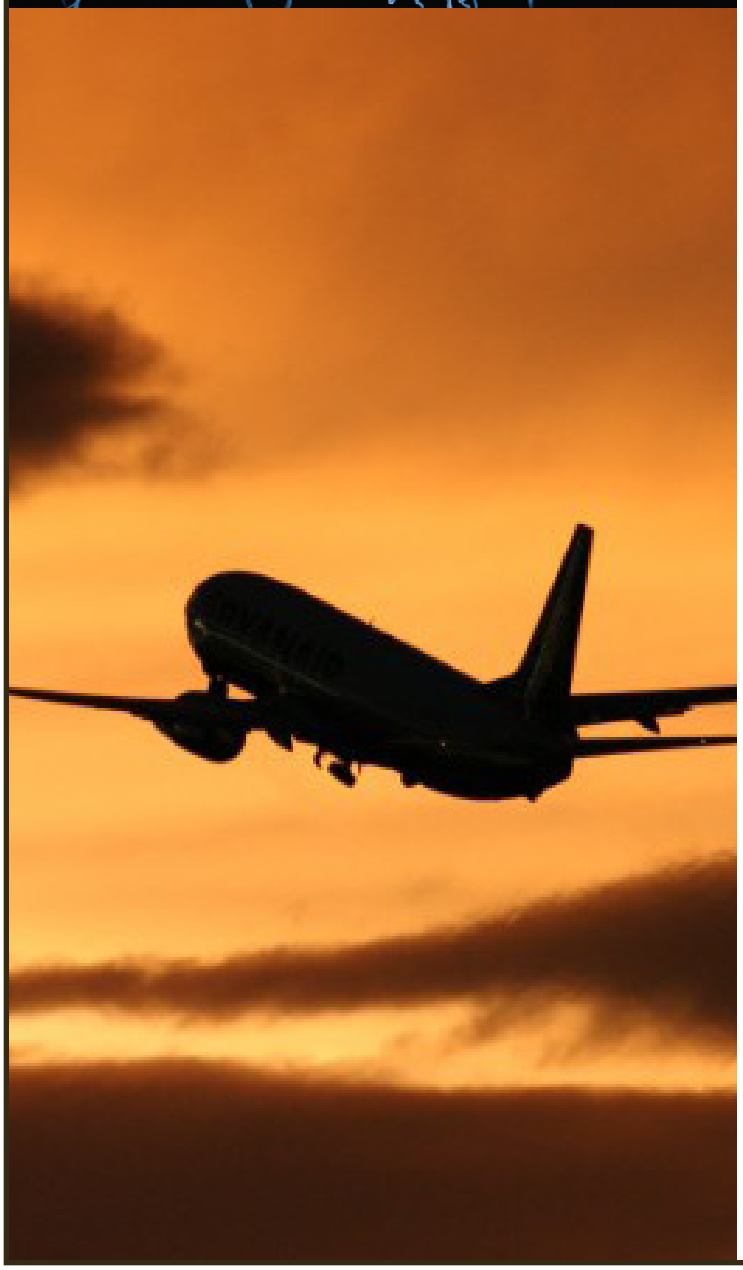

What to do if you travel to West Africa

- Avoid direct contact with blood or body fluids or items that came into contact with blood or body fluids from a person with Ebola.
- Do not touch bats or monkeys or blood, fluids, or raw meat prepared from these animals.
- Avoid facilities where Ebola patients are being treated
- Do not touch the body of a person who died of Ebola.
- Avoid contact with semen from a man who survived Ebola (for example, oral, vaginal, or anal sex).

After you return, watch for signs and symptoms of Ebola for 21 days

- Watch for Ebola symptoms like severe headache, fatigue (feeling very tired), muscle pain, vomiting, diarrhea, stomach pain, or unexplained bleeding or bruising.

If you get sick with a fever or other Ebola symptoms

- Get medical care right away.
- Notify:
  - Your state or local health department
  - CDC (1-800-232-4636)
  - 911 if it is a medical emergency

"We recognize that even a single case of Ebola in the United States seems threatening, but the simple truth is that we do know how to stop the spread of Ebola between people." *– Beth Bell, MD, MPH, Director of the National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases*