

# **NATIONAL HEALTH EDUCATION WEEK NOVEMBER 20-24, 2014**

## **EBOLA COMMUNITY AWARENESS AND SENSITIZATION OUTREACH PROJECT**

of

MINORITY HEALTH PROMOTION INITIATIVE (MHPI)  
Non Governmental Organization (NGO) IN CAMEROON  
[www.minorityhealthpromotion.com](http://www.minorityhealthpromotion.com)

Presented by

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### **Definition and Origin of the Disease**

According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Ebola, previously known as Ebola hemorrhagic fever, is a rare and deadly disease caused by infection with one of the Ebola virus strains. Ebola can cause disease in humans and nonhuman primates (monkeys, gorillas, and chimpanzees).

Ebola viruses are found in several African countries. Ebola was first discovered in 1976 near the Ebola River in what is now the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Since then, outbreaks have appeared sporadically in Africa.

## Reservoir of Infection

The natural reservoir host of Ebola virus remains unknown. However, on the basis of evidence and the nature of similar viruses, researchers believe that the virus is animal-borne and that bats are the most likely reservoir. Four of the five virus strains occur in an animal host native to Africa.

## Geographic Distribution of the Disease

The 2014 Ebola epidemic is the largest in history, affecting multiple countries in West Africa. There were a small number of cases reported in Nigeria and a single case reported in Senegal; however, these cases are considered to be contained, with no further spread in these countries. Most cases are reported in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone.

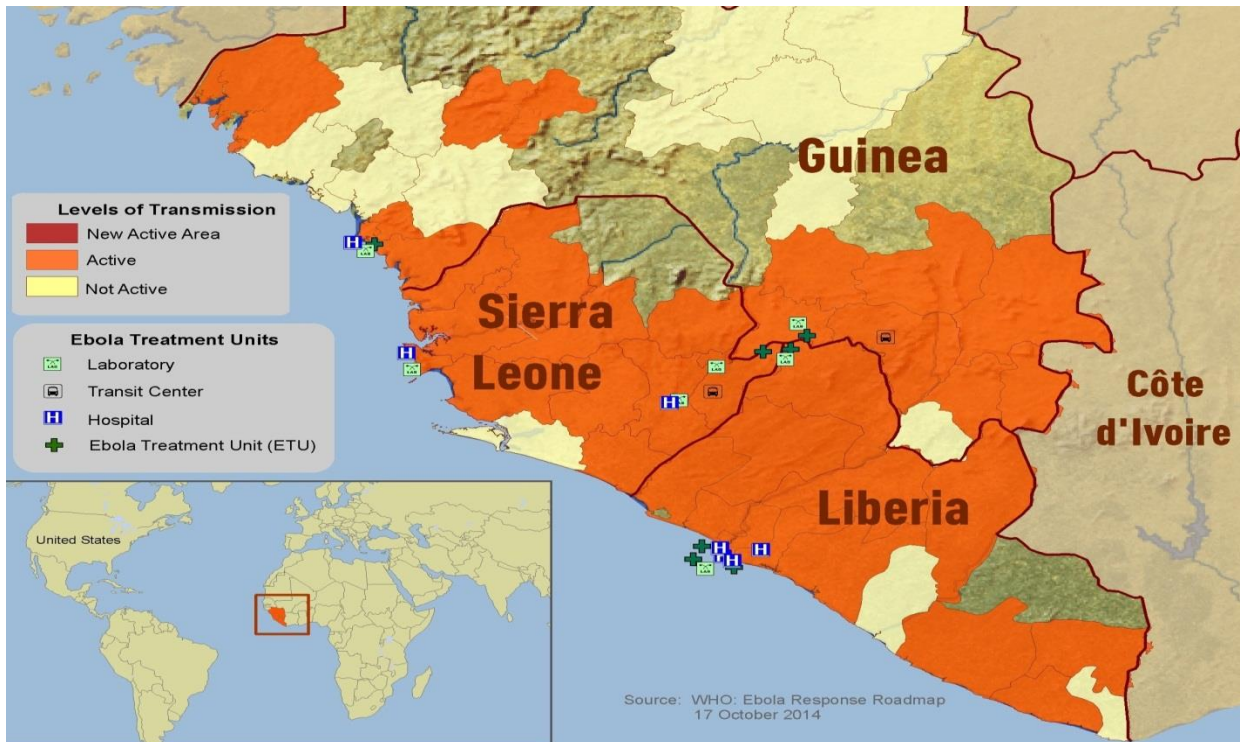
Case counts updated in conjunction with the World Health Organization updates and are based on information reported by the Ministries of Health.

As of October 19, 2014 (Updated October 22, 2014)

Total Cases: 9,915

Laboratory-Confirmed Cases: **5,481**

Total Deaths: **4,555**



## Clinical Manifestations

Symptoms of Ebola include:

- Fever
- Severe headache
- Muscle pain
- Weakness
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Abdominal (stomach) pain
- Unexplained hemorrhage (bleeding or bruising)

## Incubation Period

Symptoms may appear anywhere from 2 to 21 days after exposure to Ebola, but the average is 8 to 10 days.

## **Transmission of Ebola**

According to the CDC, when an infection does occur in humans, the virus can be spread in several ways to others. Ebola is spread through

- direct contact (through broken skin or mucous membranes in, for example, the eyes, nose, or mouth) with blood or body fluids (including but not limited to urine, saliva, sweat, feces, vomit, breast milk, and semen) of a person who is sick with Ebola;
- objects (like needles and syringes) that have been contaminated with the virus infected bats or primates (apes and monkeys);
- Ebola is not spread through the air or by water, or in general, by food. However, in Africa, Ebola may be spread as a result of handling bush meat (wild animals hunted for food) and contact with infected bats;
- There is no evidence that mosquitos or other insects can transmit Ebola virus; and
- Only a few species of mammals (for example, humans, bats, monkeys, and apes) have shown the ability to become infected with and spread Ebola virus.

## **Susceptible Population**

Healthcare providers caring for Ebola patients including family and friends in close contact with Ebola patients are at the highest risk of getting sick because they may come in contact with infected blood or body fluids of sick patients.

## **Prevention**

1. According to the CDC and the World Health Organization (WHO), if one travels to or are in an area affected by an Ebola outbreak, the following measures are advised:
  - Practice careful hygiene. For example, wash your hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer and avoid contact with blood and body fluids.

- Do not handle items that may have come in contact with an infected person's blood or body fluids (such as clothes, bedding, needles, and medical equipment).
- Avoid funeral or burial rituals that require handling the body of someone who has died from Ebola.
- Avoid contact with bats and nonhuman primates or blood, fluids, and raw meat prepared from these animals.
- Avoid hospitals in West Africa where Ebola patients are being treated. The U.S. Embassy or Consulate is often able to provide advice on facilities.
- After you return, monitor your health for 21 days and seek medical care immediately if you develop symptoms of Ebola.

## 2. Health Institutions and Healthcare workers should:

- Separate patient in a private room with its own bathroom;
- Use proper infection prevention and control measures; standard, contact, and droplet precautions are recommended if Ebola is suspected;
- Wear the right personal protective equipment (PPE) Adobe PDF file, including masks, gloves, gowns, face mask and eye protection, when entering the patient care area;
- Carefully remove PPE and make sure not to contaminate your skin and clothing before leaving the patient area;
- Dispose of PPE as biohazard waste;
- Wash hands using soap and water (preferred) or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol after removing PPE;
- Use soap and water when hands are visibly dirty.
- Notify local or State Health department immediately if Ebola is suspected. The health department can provide additional guidance regarding medical evaluation or testing, if indicated.
- Follow protocols for cleaning and disinfecting reusable medical equipment and proper disposal of needles and other disposable equipment.

## 3. General population should notify health officials if you have had direct contact with the blood or body fluids, such as but not limited to, feces, saliva, urine, vomit, and semen of a person who is sick with Ebola. The virus can enter the body through broken skin or unprotected mucous membranes in, for example, the eyes, nose, or mouth.

## **Nigeria Declared Free of Ebola**

The Ebola virus was introduced into Nigeria on 20 July 2014 when an infected Liberian man arrived by aeroplane into Lagos, Africa's most populous city. The man, who died in the hospital 5 days later, set off a chain of transmission that infected a total of 19 people, of whom 7 died.

According to WHO recommendations, the end of an Ebola virus disease outbreak in a country can be declared once 42 days have passed and no new cases have been detected. The 42 days represents twice the maximum incubation period for Ebola (21 days). This 42-day period starts from the last day that any person in the country had contact with a confirmed or probable Ebola case.

On 20 October, Nigeria reached that 42-day mark and is now considered free of Ebola transmission.

## **Sources and Further Reading**

Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

World Health Organization (WHO) [www.who.int](http://www.who.int)