



Ebola

What you need to know.

What is Ebola Virus Disease?

Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) is caused by infection with a virus called *Ebolavirus*. It is a severe, often deadly, disease in humans and primates like monkeys, gorillas, and chimpanzees. *Ebolavirus* was first discovered in 1976 in the African country of Zaire (now called Democratic Republic of Congo), near the Ebola River for which the disease is named. Since then, outbreaks have occurred in many African countries.

Where is Ebola Virus Disease spreading?

In September 2022, there was a confirmed outbreak of the *Sudan ebolavirus* strain in west central Uganda. Five districts (Mubende, Kyegegwa, Kassanda, Kagadi, Bunyangabu) have been tied to this outbreak. The current outbreak does not include the capital Kampala or the travel hub of Entebbe. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is working closely with the Ministry of Health in Uganda, the World Health Organization, and other partners to support the outbreak response and bring it to an end.

Are there any cases of Ebola Virus Disease in the U.S.?

There have been no EVD cases in the U.S. tied to the current 2022 outbreak in Uganda. The last known case of EVD in the U.S. was in 2014 and tied to the 2014 - 2016 outbreak in West Africa. Eleven patients were treated in the U.S for EVD during the 2014 - 2016 West Africa outbreak.

What are the symptoms of Ebola Virus Disease?

The first symptoms of Ebola are sudden onset of fever, tiredness, muscle pain and headache. These symptoms are followed by vomiting, diarrhea, rash and in some cases, both internal and external bleeding. Symptoms may appear anywhere from 2 to 21 days after exposure to Ebola, but the average is 8 to 10 days.

How is Ebola Virus Disease spread?

EVD is spread from person to person through direct contact with blood or body fluids of a person who is sick with or has died from EVD. It may also be spread through indirect contact with surfaces or objects like bedding or towels that have touched the body fluids of a person who is sick with or has died from EVD. A person has to have symptoms before they can spread EVD to another person. EVD is **not** spread through the air, water, or in general, food.

Can a person with Ebola Virus Disease breastfeed?

When safe alternatives to breastfeeding and infant care exist, mothers with EVD should not have close contact with their infants including breastfeeding. There is not enough evidence to provide guidance on when it is safe to resume breastfeeding after a mother's recovery from EVD, unless her breast milk can be shown to be *Ebolavirus*-free by lab testing.

If a suspected case of Ebola Virus Disease is reported in Oklahoma what actions will the Oklahoma State Department of Health (OSDH) take to prevent the spread?

If a suspected case of EVD is reported in Oklahoma, the OSDH will work with the healthcare facility to collect information about patient's travel, exposure, symptoms; conduct tests to confirm *Ebolavirus* infection; and identify and monitor close contacts to stop the spread of infection.

Can you get *Ebolavirus* from pets or give it to them?

There have been no reports of dogs or cats becoming sick with Ebola virus or of being able to spread Ebola to people or other animals. However, out of caution, it is recommended to keep animals away from blood or body fluids of a person with symptoms of EVD. There is currently no evidence that *Ebolavirus* can infect non-mammals kept as pets, including birds, reptiles, amphibians, or fish. More information on Ebola and animals is available [here](#).

How long can *Ebolavirus* live outside the body?

Ebolavirus can live for several hours on dried surfaces, such as doorknobs or countertops. The virus in blood or other body fluids can live up to several days at room temperature even after death.

What cleaners can be used to kill *Ebolavirus*?

Hospital-grade disinfectants (including bleach) will kill *Ebolavirus*. It is recommended to use a disinfectant that states it is effective against non-enveloped viruses like norovirus, rotavirus, adenovirus, and poliovirus.

How do I know if I have been exposed to *Ebolavirus*?

If you have traveled to an area with an EVD outbreak or had close contact with a person sick with EVD, you may be at risk if you had direct contact with any body fluids from the sick person. Call the OSDH Epidemiologist-on-Call [immediately](#) at 405-426-8710 to talk about your travel history and other exposures. They can give you recommendations based on your exposure risk. That number is available to call 24 hours a day, seven days a week, all throughout the year.

What should I do if I traveled and think I may have been exposed to *Ebolavirus*?

If you think you may have been exposed to *Ebolavirus*, call the OSDH Epidemiologist-on-Call [immediately](#) at (405-426-8710) 24/7/365. They can evaluate your exposure risk and give you recommendations to prevent the spread to other people. You should watch for symptoms of EVD for 21 days following your last exposure by taking your temperature two times a day and watching for other symptoms. If you think you have been exposed to *Ebolavirus* and have symptoms, present to the nearest hospital for care. If possible, call ahead to let them know about your *Ebolavirus* exposure. If unable to call ahead, immediately notify the medical staff upon entering the facility.

If I may have been exposed to *Ebolavirus*, is it safe for me to go to school or college?

During the time you are watching for signs and symptoms, you can continue your normal activities, including going to work or school if you are not ill, unless instructed otherwise by public health officials.

What if I get sick after I come back from an area with an Ebola Virus Disease outbreak?

Get medical care *right away* if you have a fever greater than 100.4°F, extreme tiredness, severe headache, muscle pain, loss of appetite, vomiting, diarrhea, stomach pain, or unexplained bruising or bleeding. Before you go to the doctor's office or emergency room, call ahead and tell your doctor about your recent travel or contact with a person who was sick with EVD and your symptoms. Calling before visiting the doctor will help the medical staff care for you and protect other individuals who may be in the doctor's office or emergency room. When traveling to get medical care, limit your contact with others.

Am I at risk if I am on a flight with a person who has Ebola Virus Disease?

A person with EVD is only a risk to others if they are showing signs of illness. If a person is experiencing symptoms of EVD while on a flight, health officials will conduct an investigation to identify people who sat close to the ill person or had other close contact with the ill person. Close contacts will be notified by health officials and monitored for symptoms.

Should I be concerned about Ebola Virus Disease happening in Oklahoma?

The general public is not at an increased risk of exposure to EVD, but the OSDH realizes that it causes a lot of public worry and concern. The OSDH is working with the CDC to monitor all travelers returning from Uganda. This helps identify people at highest risk for exposure so they can be monitored for symptoms after returning to the U.S. If someone with EVD comes to Oklahoma, it is very unlikely it would spread widely.

What is happening at airports in the United States to prevent Ebola?

In October 2022, five airports in the United States began screening travelers on flights that originate from Uganda. Travelers from Uganda to the U.S. are to fly into JFK International, Newark Liberty, Washington Dulles, O'Hare, or Hartsfield Jackson. At each of these airports, CDC officials are doing health screenings and providing informational materials for travelers. The CDC then notifies state health officials of the travelers so they can review exposure risk and begin symptom monitoring.