

Self Monitoring Protocol

The Winnipeg Health Region (WHR) is dedicated to a safe environment for all.

While Ebola virus disease (EVD) is not indigenous to Canada, international travel and the presence of the National Microbiology Laboratory (NML) may provide the opportunity for the transport and introduction of these agents or infected individuals. There has never been a confirmed case of EVD in Manitoba or Canada.

The risk of Ebola transmission is low. Becoming infected requires direct contact with the bodily fluids (e.g., vomit, feces, urine, blood, semen) of people who have been infected with or died from EVD, or contact with equipment and/or environment soiled with contaminated body fluids (e.g., used needles). Transmission to healthcare workers has been reported when infection prevention and control measures have not been observed (e.g., inappropriate use of Personal Protective Equipment). This transmission has occurred in the current outbreak areas in West Africa.

The WHR has designed a directive for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) which meets or exceeds the recommendations of the Public Health Agency of Canada and Manitoba Health.

As a staff member who cares for patients under investigation, as well as probable and confirmed cases of EVD, you have been trained in Routine Practices and Enhanced Droplet/Contact Precautions as these precautions relate to EVD, including appropriate use of PPE.

In addition to these preventive measures, within the Operational Directive, self-monitoring of staff members caring for these patients is also required.

What is Self-Monitoring?

Self-monitoring occurs under the direction of WRHA Occupational and Environmental Safety and Health (OESH). It involves you taking your oral temperature twice daily throughout your assignment and for 21 days, following your last patient contact. Temperatures are to be taken with the thermometer issued to you by WRHA OESH, and recorded on the form also issued by WRHA OESH. If you develop a fever or any of the symptoms listed on the form you must self isolate and immediately report this to WRHA OESH by calling 204-232-9075.

Why Self-Monitor?

Ebola is not infectious unless symptoms appear, and there is a low risk for transmission during the early stages. This is different from other illnesses, such as influenza, which can be infectious before symptoms appear. Self-monitoring of temperature and signs/symptoms provides timely assessment to an unlikely potential exposure. Remember: becoming infected requires direct/indirect contact with the blood/bodily fluids of infected people. Caring for patients under investigation, or those considered probable or confirmed cases **does not** mean you're exposed. Strict compliance with IP&C precautions is mandatory to avoid potential exposure to infectious material.

Is it safe to Self-Monitor at Home with my Family?

Yes it is. Self-monitoring is a preventive measure to protect you and your family. As mentioned above, Ebola is not infectious unless symptoms appear.

Please note an increase in temperature alone does not indicate EVD.