



Ebola

What is Ebola virus disease?

Ebola virus disease is a serious illness where the Ebola virus spreads through the body and can cause fever and other symptoms in humans and animals. The virus was first found in 1976 in remote parts of central Africa. The current outbreak started in West Africa, mainly in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra-Leone.

What are the symptoms?

Symptoms of Ebola include fever, tiredness, muscle aches, severe headache, red eyes, sore throat, vomiting and diarrhea that can be bloody. Fever is usually the first symptom of Ebola. Ebola can also cause kidney and liver problems. When disease progresses, there may be a rash and bleeding from inside and outside the body. Ebola can cause death but early medical care increases survival.



How long does it take to get symptoms if you have been infected?

Symptoms start 2 to 21 days after infection.

Can you spread Ebola before symptoms begin?

No. Only people with symptoms can pass the virus to others.

How does Ebola spread?

Ebola is not easy to spread. It is not spread through the air like the flu. Ebola can spread by contact with:

- blood, body fluids or tissues of infected persons
- medical equipment (such as needles) that touched infected body fluids

How is Ebola diagnosed?

People suspected of having Ebola are given a special blood test to determine if they have the disease.

Can Ebola be treated?

At this time there is no specific treatment or vaccine for Ebola. People have recovered from Ebola when they received proper and timely medical care for their symptoms.

Should I worry about Ebola?

Ebola is a serious disease and it is normal to have questions and possibly worries. Chances of Ebola coming to Winnipeg are very low. There has been no case of Ebola in Canada. There are many efforts to control Ebola in West Africa, as this is the best way to prevent spread to other countries.



How do I protect myself and others?

There is no risk from being in contact with a person who:

- Has no symptoms, even if he/she recently (within the last 21 days) arrived from an affected country;
- Has symptoms which began more than 21 days after arriving from an affected country
- Is from an affected country but has not been there recently

Those who have direct contact with or who provide care to a person sick with Ebola without using the right personal protective clothing and equipment are at most risk. This may include family members, health care workers, and others.

How ready are we?

The WRHA is working with others such as Manitoba Health, Healthy Living and Seniors, to plan in case Ebola comes to Winnipeg. All health care systems have developed tools to safely screen and assess for Ebola. The Health Sciences Centre is the designated hospital in Winnipeg to safely care for someone with Ebola. Staff there is trained to provide care safely. We are well prepared and continue to make improvements for safe and effective treatment.

For more information search for 'Ebola' on the Manitoba Health, Healthy Living and Seniors website at <http://www.manitoba.ca/health/publichealth/diseases/ebola.html>