

CNPHI Posting (Draft)

Date: July 28th, 2014
Subject: Ebola virus disease in West Africa
Priority: Yellow (Important)

Posting Description:

This posting is being provided for your information.

New cases continue to be reported for the Ebola virus disease (EVD) outbreak currently occurring in Western Africa. As of July 23rd, 2014, 1,201 cases and 672 deaths were reported to the World Health Organization by the Ministries of Health in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone and additional cases are expected. More information on the outbreaks can be found on the World Health Organization's Global Alert and Response website: <http://www.who.int/csr/don/archive/disease/ebola/en/>.

The Public Health Agency of Canada continues to monitor the situation, and its National Microbiology Laboratory currently has a team in Sierra Leone providing assistance. We have not been notified of any cases among Canadians related to this outbreak, although we are aware that Canadians are participating in the response in affected countries. The risk to most travellers is considered low; however, healthcare workers in Canada should be vigilant for persons with symptoms compatible with EVD and who have returned from these countries within 21 days of symptom onset.

Health care professionals working in outbreak settings:

The risk of infection is increased for those working in a health care setting in the outbreak areas since transmission can occur through direct contact with the body fluids of affected cases and corpses.

Health care workers working in affected areas should practice strict infection control measures, including the use of gowns, masks, goggles, and gloves. The document *Routine Practices and Additional Precautions for Preventing the Transmission of Infection in Healthcare Settings* contains further information on preventing the transmission of the Ebola virus in a health care setting*. In addition to routine practices for all patients, additional precautions include contact and droplet, and recommendations to reduce aerosol generation, where AGMP procedures are required <http://publications.gc.ca/site/eng/440707/publication.html>.

Health care professionals in Canada:

Canadian health care professionals are advised to be on the lookout for illnesses compatible with EVD in recent travellers, including health care workers, to affected areas and should consider isolation pending diagnostic testing and results; however, other illnesses prevalent in this region should also be considered (e.g. Malaria, Typhoid, etc.). **Strict infection control practices should be implemented for any suspected or probable case of EVD.** All probable cases of EVD must be immediately reported to the Public Health Agency of Canada through its 24-hour emergency line: 1-866-262-8433.

Travellers:

The Public Health Agency of Canada recommends that travellers avoid all direct contact with a person or corpse infected with the Ebola virus and to avoid contact with or handling of an animal suspected of having Ebola. A travel health notice has been issued by the Government of Canada: <http://travel.gc.ca/travelling/health-safety/travel-health-notice/ebola>.

Information on Ebola virus disease, including symptoms, prevention, and treatment is available at: <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/id-mi/vhf-fvh/ebola-eng.php>.

* Table 10, page 98: Transmission characteristics and precautions by specific etiology; Recommendations for Routine Practices p. 52; Recommendations for Contact Precautions p. 64; and recommendations for Airborne Precautions p. 81