

## **Ebola Awareness**

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

*Information obtained from <http://cdc.gov>*

#### **What is Ebola?**

Ebola is a hemorrhagic fever that is caused by infection with one of the Ebola virus strains. Ebola can cause disease in humans and nonhuman primates (monkeys, gorillas, and chimpanzees).

#### **What are the symptoms of Ebola?**

- Fever greater than 101.5 degrees Fahrenheit
- Severe headache
- Muscle pain
- Weakness
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Abdominal (stomach) pain
- Unexplained hemorrhage (bleeding or bruising)

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

#### **How is it transmitted?**

Ebola is only transmitted by direct contact with the blood or body fluids of a person who has symptoms of the disease, or objects like needles and syringes that have been contaminated. Ebola is not spread through the air or by water or in food.

#### **What are body fluids?**

Body fluids include saliva, mucus, vomit, feces, sweat, tears, breast milk, urine, and semen.

#### **What does “direct contact” mean?**

Direct contact means that body fluids from an infected person have touched someone’s eyes, nose, mouth, or an open cut, wound, or abrasion.

#### **What about coughing and sneezing?**

Unlike respiratory illnesses such as measles or chickenpox, which is transmitted by virus particles that remain suspended in the air after an infected person coughs or sneezes, Ebola is transmitted by

direct contact with the body fluids of a person who has the symptoms of Ebola disease. Coughing and sneezing are not common symptoms of Ebola. However, if a person with Ebola coughs or sneezes on someone, and saliva or mucus come into direct contact with that person's eyes, nose, or mouth, the disease may be transmitted.

### **How long does Ebola live outside the body?**

Ebola is killed with disinfectants (such as household bleach). On a dried surface (such as doorknobs and countertops) the Ebola virus can survive for several hours.

### **Are patients who recover from Ebola immune for life? Can they get it again – the same or a different strain?**

Available evidence shows that people who recover from Ebola develop antibodies that last for at least 10 years, possibly longer depending upon their immune system. We do not know if they can become infected with a different strain of Ebola.

### **If someone survives Ebola, can he or she still spread the virus?**

Once someone recovers from Ebola, they can no longer spread the virus.

### **Can Ebola be spread through mosquitos?**

There is no evidence that mosquitos or other insects can transmit the Ebola virus.

