



FEVER



VOMITING
Sometimes bloody



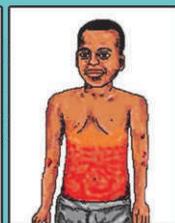
DIARRHOEA
Sometimes bloody



BLEEDING



**MUSCLE OR
JOINT PAIN**



SKIN RASH

**FREQUENTLY
ASKED
QUESTIONS ON
EBOLA**

**For TV/radio/community/school
discussions and Toll Free staffs**



Disease and Human Transmission

1. **Is Ebola in Sierra Leone?** Yes, the Ebola Virus Disease is in Sierra Leone. According to the Ministry of Health and Sanitation and WHO, many confirmed Ebola cases have been found in the country.
2. **What is Ebola virus disease?** Ebola virus disease is a severe, often fatal illness, with a death rate of up to 90%, without medical treatment. With early medical treatment the death rate can be significantly reduced. The Ebola virus is spread by contact with bush-animals (mostly monkeys and bats). Ebola is also spread by a person infected by the Ebola virus.
3. **Is an infected person contagious even if symptoms have not appeared?** A person infected with Ebola is not contagious before the symptoms appear. The incubation period 2 to 21 days.
4. **What are the signs and symptoms of Ebola?** Ebola is characterized by the following signs and symptoms:
 - High fever (brutal and prolonged)
 - Abdominal pain
 - Joint or body pain (especially the chest)
 - Difficulty in swallowing
 - Headache(s)
 - Nausea, vomiting (can be bloody)
 - Diarrhea (can be bloody)
 - Dehydration (no tears, dry tongue, sunken eyes).
 - Rash
 - In some cases bleeding from the mouth, eyes, nose, ears, anus.A person is contagious only when they begin to have one or more signs of the disease.

5. **Can a person with Ebola survive?** Yes, the chances of survival increase significantly if there is early medical treatment.
6. **If a person infected by Ebola survives, is she/he contagious?** No, before returning home, Ebola patients WILL have their blood tested in the laboratory to ensure the virus is no longer in their body systems. However, people who have recovered from the illness should NOT have sex for at least three months unless they use condoms.
7. **Can Ebola be transmitted by saliva?** Yes. The Ebola Virus can be transmitted by saliva and other secretions such as stool, urine, semen, vaginal secretions, runny nose, as well as blood. When these fluids get in contact with broken skin, the eyes, or the mouth of other people, they can get the Ebola virus.
8. **Can Ebola be transmitted by sweat?** Yes. Any body fluids including sweat have the Ebola virus.
9. **Can Ebola be transmitted by shaking hands?** Yes, shaking hands with confirmed Ebola patients transmits the disease.
10. **How should I greet people, if the hands shake is not recommended?** Hand shaking should be avoided as it is a risk during the outbreak or before a potential outbreak. You can greet people by waving to them or acknowledge by shaking your head. Washing your hands with soap and clean water regularly is also recommended.
11. **What distance do I need to keep away from people suspected of having Ebola?** Specific distance does not matter. Ebola is transmitted by contact with body fluids

from an infected person. However, if you know any person suspected of Ebola, please report to the nearest health facility as soon as possible and listen to the advice from health workers. Avoid touching and handling objects that have been used by a suspected person with Ebola.

Disease and animal transmission

- 12. Why should I not eat bush-meat?** Do not eat bush-meat during an Ebola outbreak. Wild animals are the source of the Ebola virus. Monkeys, chimpanzees, bats or all dead animals found in the bush must NOT be touched or eaten.
- 13. If a bush-meat is well cooked, is it safe?** No, because during the hunting, slaughtering and preparing these bush-meats people are exposed to the Ebola Virus. That is how the transmission occurs and why people should avoid bush-meats.
- 14. Can I eat smoked bush meats?** No, because during the hunting, slaughtering and preparing these bush-meats people are exposed to the Ebola Virus. That is how the transmission occurs and why people should avoid bush-meats.
- 15. Do I need to avoid all bush-meats or just monkey and bat meats?** During an Ebola outbreak, avoid all bush-meats because they are very dangerous and can infect you with Ebola.
- 16. Can Ebola be in chicken, goat or cow?** No. There is no evidence linking Ebola and domestic animals such as chicken, goats and cows. It is only bush-meat that is dangerous.

- 17. Should I stop eating fish too?** No, fish is very safe. Please continue eating fish.
- 18. Can I get Ebola through contact with urine and droppings of bats?** Yes, bats are a carrier of the Ebola Virus. You can get Ebola if you are in contact with urine and/or dropping of infected bats. Avoid contact with bats and their body fluids including droppings before and during an Ebola outbreak.
- 19. During the rainy season, there are many bats and they feed on mangoes. Do I stop eating mangoes?** No, you can continue eating mangos but wash them before eating. Do not eat mangoes that have been bitten by bat (bat mot).

Treatment

- 20. What do I do if I think I have Ebola?** You must go immediately to the nearest health facility for assessment and treatment.
- 21. Where can I buy medicine to treat Ebola?** There is no medicine or vaccine for Ebola. Please go to the nearest health facility for early treatment if you think you have Ebola. Your chances for survival and recovery are much higher if you seek early treatment and care from qualified health workers.
- 22. I have heard that people are injected and killed at the health center. Is this true?** That is a false rumor. Although people do die of Ebola some patients recover. Chances for survival are greater the earlier treatment begins. All Ebola patients receive the best medical care and treatment possible. The medical team is working hard

to save their patients and to have them returned to their families. At the health center the medical team provides treats Ebola by:

- Lowering the fever
- Pain Reduction
- Good Nutrition
- Rehydration
- Infection control

Beliefs

- 23. Is it true that a mix of ginger, honey, garlic, onion and vinegar can cure Ebola?** No, it is not true. There is no home remedy but there is treatment for Ebola Virus Disease. You must go to the nearest health facility for proper management and treatment if you or someone you suspect has an Ebola infection. Your chances for survival are much higher at a treatment center than at home.
- 24. We have heard that drinking alcohol prevents Ebola virus transmission. Is this true?** No, it is not true. Alcohol does not prevent Ebola. In fact, excessive consumption of alcohol is harmful to your body.
- 25. Is it true that Ebola is a curse?** No, it is not true. Ebola is a viral disease transmitted to humans from wild animals. It can also be spread from person to person.

Reporting

- 26. Can I call a hotline to report suspected cases of Ebola?** Yes, call toll free 117 to report any Ebola suspected case. You can get more information on Ebola Virus Disease on this number. You should also report any suspected case to the nearest health facility as soon as possible.

- 27. How effective is the surveillance system in Sierra Leone?** There is a surveillance system in place that can identify any suspected Ebola case occurring anywhere in the country. There is contact tracing going on to limit the spread of Ebola for all people linked to confirmed cases. The country also has capacity to test for Ebola virus at Kenema and Kailahun.
- 28. Can I care for a suspected person with Ebola at home?** No, it is a crime. You will be detained and punished to the full extent of the law. Furthermore you are endangering the lives of your loved ones, your own life and those of the community, because the disease can easily spread from one person to another.

Government Responses

- 29. What system has the government put in place to screen people entering Sierra Leone?** The MoHS is working on distributing assessment questionnaires to all travelers entering Sierra Leone. Port Health Officers at the points of official entrance in Sierra Leone have been trained on Ebola and are able to identify any suspicious cases on arrival at their ports.
- 30. What are the plans of the government to send information about Ebola to the rural population?** The government has conducted sensitization meetings with religious leaders, school authorities and community based organizations. Thus information will be provided to the rural population from numerous sources. Communication material such as posters and fact sheets have also been developed and disseminated nationwide. TV, Radios and SMS are also used to reach rural communities. The GoSL is supported in these activities by international and national health organizations.

31. Does the government plan to close the borders with Guinea and Liberia? No. Currently, there is no plan for closing the borders with Guinea and Liberia. The government has conducted weekly teleconference with Guinea and Liberia to exchange Ebola information and for better coordination. Closing the borders with Guinea and Liberia might be dangerous as it might lead to the increase in the use of illegal entry points that would defeat efforts to screen people entering in Sierra Leone.