



## What is Ebola?

Ebola – previously known as Ebola hemorrhagic fever – is a severe, often fatal disease. The U.S. has had one travel-associated case. Although the risk of Ebola spreading in the U.S. is very low, the medical and public health community across the country is taking the situation very seriously and is working to ensure systems are in place to identify, isolate, test and treat people with Ebola-like symptoms and prevent this from happening. This fact sheet provides basic information about Ebola.

### **Remember:**

*Ebola is not airborne. A person infected with Ebola cannot pass it to others until symptoms appear. The people most at risk of contracting Ebola are healthcare workers, families and friends who come into close contact with the blood or body fluids of people infected with Ebola.*

## How is Ebola spread?

Ebola is not spread through the air, water, or food. Ebola is spread through **direct** contact (through broken skin or mucous membranes) with:

- Blood or body fluids (like urine, feces, saliva, vomit, breast milk and semen) from a person sick with Ebola.
- Objects (like clothes, bedding, needles, or medical equipment) contaminated with the blood or body fluids from a person sick with Ebola.

## What are the signs and symptoms of Ebola?

It takes 2 to 21 days for symptoms to appear from the time of exposure. Signs of Ebola include: fever (higher than 101.5°F) and symptoms like severe headache, muscle pain, vomiting, diarrhea, stomach pain, or unexplained bleeding or bruising.

## Who is at risk of contracting Ebola?

The people most at risk of contracting Ebola are healthcare workers, families and friends who come into close contact with the blood or body fluids (see above) of people infected with Ebola.

## How is Ebola treated?

There is no FDA-approved vaccine available for Ebola. Experimental vaccines and treatments for Ebola are under development, but they have not yet been fully tested for safety or effectiveness.

## What is the Cook County Department of Public Health (CCDPH) doing about Ebola?

CCDPH officials understand the situation is concerning, even with the limited risk Ebola poses to SCC residents, and will continue to:

- Provide guidance to suburban Cook County (SCC) healthcare systems on the evaluation and case management of suspect and confirmed cases of Ebola to reduce the chance of transmission and limit the potential spread of the disease.
- Perform the primary function of public health, which is to monitor for the spread of disease and intervene to eliminate the risk of transmission to the public through routine surveillance and working closely with state and other local health officials.
- Provide updates to our residents via [www.cookcountypublichealth.org](http://www.cookcountypublichealth.org) and social media at Facebook/CCDPH and Twitter/CookCoHealth.

## Where can I get more information about Ebola?

For more information about Ebola, please visit the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at: [www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola](http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola).