

United States Embassy Monrovia, Liberia
Security Message for U.S. Citizens: Ebola Hemorrhagic Fever In Guinea
March 28, 2014

On March 24, the U.S. Embassy in Monrovia posted a message on reported cases of Ebola hemorrhagic fever in Guinea. At that time, the Government of Guinea confirmed the presence of the Ebola virus in the Nzérékoré (Guinee Forestiere) region, mostly in the administrative district of Gueckedo and in the town of Macenta. Symptoms include diarrhea, vomiting, a high fever and heavy bleeding. Since that initial announcement, reporting of suspected cases in Liberia has decreased even as public awareness and surveillance has increased. With increased surveillance, additional cases have been diagnosed only in the same region and a cluster of five cases in the capital, Conakry, related to caring for a sick man who had just left the affected region.

To date, all suspected cases included in statistical counts have been directly traceable to contacts in Guinea. Regional health care systems remain on high alert to deal appropriately with suspected cases should they present. Since Ebola is transmitted only through direct contact with contaminated blood and bodily fluid, current recommendations for vigilant hygiene practice remain in place. Ebola transmission is different than influenza and respiratory viruses as it has not been documented to spread among humans by the respiratory route and so is not easily transmissible in typical community settings.

At their request, four U.S. government-affiliated individuals were moved from Foya and Voinjama (two towns near the border of Guinea in Liberia's Lofa county) to Zorzor (another town in Lofa county) last weekend. The two from Voinjama have returned to Voinjama as of March 28. The two from Foya are still in Zorzor.

The U.S. Embassy in Monrovia strongly recommends that U.S. citizens avoid contact with individuals exhibiting the symptoms described above until further information becomes available.

To obtain Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) travel notices, call the CDC at 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636) from within the United States, or 1-404-639-3534 from overseas, or visit the CDC website at <http://www.cdc.gov/travel>. For more information on Ebola hemorrhagic fever, please visit the CDC website at www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola.

Ebola Hemorrhagic Fever (Ebola) is a deadly disease, but is preventable. It can be spread through DIRECT, unprotected contact with the blood or

secretions of an infected person or animal; or through exposure to objects (such as needles) that have been contaminated with infected secretions. Viruses that cause Ebola are often spread through families and friends because they come in close contact with infectious secretions when caring for ill or deceased persons. Ebola has a high mortality rate and early evidence suggest that the Guinea strain of Ebola is related to the Zaire Ebola strain that carries a mortality rate of 90 percent. Some individuals who become sick with Ebola are able to recover, while others are not. While the cause of death from Ebola is unclear, It is known that patients who die usually have not developed a significant immune response to the virus at the time of death.

During outbreaks of Ebola, the disease can spread quickly within health care settings (such as a clinic or hospital). Exposure to Ebola viruses can occur in health care settings where hospital staff is not wearing appropriate protective equipment, such as masks, gowns, and gloves. Individuals should avoid handling or consuming 'bush meat' and dead animals, particularly monkeys and fruit bats.

Symptoms may appear anywhere from 2 to 21 days after exposure to Ebola virus, though 8-10 days is most common. A person suffering from Ebola presents with a sudden onset of high fever with any of the following: headache, vomiting blood, joint or muscle pains, bleeding through the body openings (eyes, nose, gums, ears, anus) and has reduced urine output.

Since the virus spreads through direct contact with blood and other body secretions of an infected person those at highest risk include health care workers and the family and friends of an infected individual.

We strongly recommend that U.S. citizens, especially those traveling to or residing in the forest region in South Central Guinea or Liberia's northern border region enroll in the Department of State's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program ([STEP](#)) at www.Travel.State.Gov. STEP enrollment gives you the latest security updates, and makes it easier for the U.S. embassy or nearest U.S. consulate to contact you in an emergency. If you don't have Internet access, enroll directly with the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate.

You can stay in touch and get Embassy updates by checking the [U.S. Embassy Monrovia](#) website. You can also get global updates at the U.S. Department of State's [Bureau of Consular Affairs website](#) where you can find the current [Worldwide Caution](#), [Travel Warning](#), [Travel Alerts](#), and [Country Specific Information](#). Follow us on [Twitter](#) and the Bureau of Consular Affairs page on [Facebook](#), or you can download our free Smart Traveler App,

available through [iTunes](#), and the [Google Play](#) store, to have travel information at your fingertips. If you don't have internet access, current information on safety and security can also be obtained by calling 1-888-407-4747 toll-free in the United States and Canada, or, for callers from other countries, a regular toll line at 1-202-501-4444. These numbers are available from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. federal holidays).

The U.S. Embassy in Monrovia is located 502 Benson Street, Monrovia, Liberia, and is open Mon – Thursday 0800- 1730 and Fridays 0800-1300; (Tel: 231 776 777 000). If you are a U.S. citizen in need of urgent assistance, the emergency number for the U.S. Embassy is: 077-677-7000 (press 1 at the prompt).