

Regions where Ebola outbreaks occurred in the past

Given the exceptional circumstances of two simultaneous devastating epidemics, and in order to use the opportunity of the interventions, it is recommended that we raise awareness on both HIV/AIDS and Ebola. Please, remember that blood and body fluids are likely to carry these viruses in infected persons. The same applies to burial practices. Extreme attention is recommended while contacting other people or handling dead bodies. The following are instructions and recommendations to avoid Ebola infection.

You can consult further on HIV at:

[www.aidsministry.com](http://www.aidsministry.com)

## Ebolavirus Ecology

### Enzootic Cycle

New evidence strongly implicates bats as the reservoir hosts for ebolaviruses, though the means of local enzootic maintenance and transmission of the virus within bat populations remain unknown.

### Ebolaviruses:

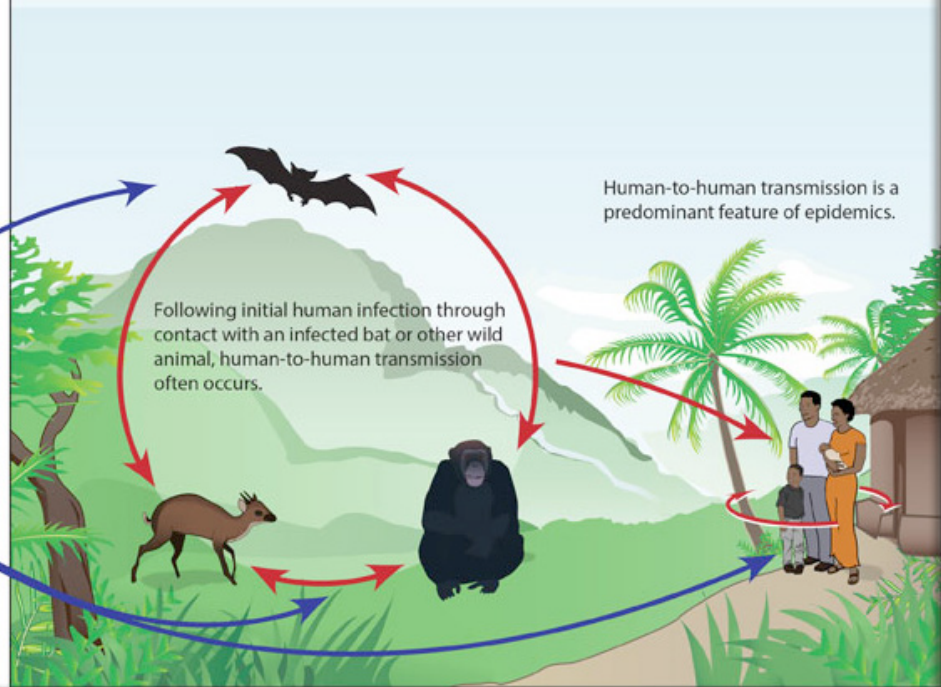
- Ebola virus (formerly Zaire virus)
- Sudan virus
- Tai Forest virus
- Bundibugyo virus
- Reston virus (non-human)



### Epizootic Cycle

Epizootics caused by ebolaviruses appear sporadically, producing high mortality among non-human primates and duikers and may precede human outbreaks. Epidemics caused by ebolaviruses produce acute disease among

humans, with the exception of Reston virus which does not produce detectable disease in humans. Little is known about how the virus first passes to humans, triggering waves of human-to-human transmission, and an epidemic.



The 2014 Ebola outbreak is the largest of this magnitude in history. This outbreak is actually the first Ebola epidemic the world has ever known — affecting multiple countries in and around West Africa. Ebola is extremely deadly in about 90% of the cases.

### **Transmission**

Because the natural reservoir of Ebola viruses has not yet been proven, the manner in which the virus first appears in a human at the start of an outbreak is unknown. However, researchers have hypothesized that the first patient becomes infected through contact with an infected animal.

When an infection does occur in humans, there are several ways in which the virus can be transmitted to others.

These include:

- 1.- direct contact with the blood or secretions of an infected person
- 2.- exposure to objects (such as needles) that have been contaminated with infected secretions
- 3.- infected animals

The viruses that cause Ebola HF (Hemorrhagic Fever) are often spread through families and friends because they come in close contact with infectious secretions when caring for people that are ill.

During outbreaks of Ebola HF, 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 are not wearing appropriate protective equipment, such as masks, gowns, and gloves.

Proper cleaning and disposal of instruments, such as needles and syringes, is also important. If instruments are not disposable, they must be sterilized before being used again. Without adequate sterilization of the instruments, virus transmission can continue and amplify an outbreak.

**Ebola is highly contagious, but it is NOT AN AIRBORNE VIRUS!**

### **Signs and Symptoms**

Symptoms of Ebola HF typically include:

Some patients may experience: Rash, Red Eyes, Hiccups, Cough, Sore throat, Chest pain, Difficulty breathing, Difficulty swallowing, Bleeding inside and outside of the body

Fever	Weakness
Headache	Diarrhea
Joint aches	Vomiting
Muscle aches	Stomach pain
Bleeding	Lack of appetite

Symptoms may appear anywhere from 2 to 21 days after exposure to the Ebola virus, though 8-10 days is most common. Some people who become sick with Ebola HF are able to recover, while others do not. The reasons behind this are not yet fully understood. However, it is known that patients who die usually have not developed a significant immune response to the virus at the time of death.

Ebola makes the person bleed to death from almost anywhere in the body.

### **PROTECT YOURSELF!!! - Prevention**

The prevention of Ebola Hemorrhagic Fever (HF) presents many challenges. Because it is still unknown exactly how exactly people are infected with Ebola HF. There are few established primary prevention measures:

- Isolate Ebola HF patients from contact with unprotected persons.
- Avoid contact with the blood or secretions of an infected patient. If a patient with Ebola HF dies, it is equally important that direct contact with the body of the deceased patient be prevented.
- Wash your hands often with soap, especially before eating.
- Avoid unnecessary contact with others. Disinfect your surroundings.
- Restrict yourself to food you prepared yourself.
- Fumigate if you have pests (rodents can carry Ebola).
- Dead bodies can still transmit Ebola. Don't touch them without using protective equipment, masks and gloves.
- Ebola is very sensitive to: detergents, disinfectants, soap, heat, direct sunlight

Source: Page modified from the CDC Fact Sheet and SA Health Dep. on Ebola infection.

