



## **Guidelines for School Nurse Assessment – Ebola Virus Disease (EVD)**

### **Criteria for evaluation:**

1. **Risk Factors:** Has the individual had any of the following exposures during the past 3 weeks?
  - a. Residence in or travel to a country where an Ebola outbreak is occurring (currently: Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone\*); **OR**
  - b. Contact with blood or body fluids of a patient known to have or suspected to have Ebola; **OR**
  - c. Direct handling of bats or nonhuman primates from disease-endemic areas.
2. **Symptoms:** Does the individual have fever or any of the following signs and symptoms associated with Ebola?
  - a. Fever of greater than 38.0 degrees Celsius or 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit; **OR**
  - b. Symptoms such as severe headache, muscle pain, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain, or unexplained bleeding.

### **Actions:**

- If the individual has not had any of the risk factors (1a-c) and is asymptomatic, he/she is not at risk for Ebola.
- If the individual has had **exposure to any of the risk factors (1a-c) within the past 3 weeks** and is asymptomatic, contact your Local Public Health Authorities (LPHA) with student's name and contact information. LPHA staff will follow-up with the individual for further assessment and health monitoring.
- If the individual has had **exposure to any of the risk factors (1a-c) within the past 3 weeks AND has fever or other symptoms** associated with Ebola (2a-b),
  - **Isolate the individual.**
  - **IMMEDIATELY inform the Wisconsin Division of Public Health (DPH) at 608-267-9003.** DPH staff will give you specific guidance, assistance and will contact your LPHA.
    - Wear personal protective equipment and practice standard, contact, and droplet precautions (e.g., gloves, gown, face mask, eye protection) when in contact with the individual.
    - If the individual is seriously ill and needs emergent care, call 911 and inform the dispatcher about his/her exposure to the appropriate risk factors listed above.
    - If the individual is not seriously ill, work with DPH staff to determine further management.

\*Check CDC website (<http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/>) for most current list of countries with active Ebola virus transmission.

## Frequently Asked Questions about Ebola Virus Disease

### What is Ebola?

Ebola is a virus in the family of viral hemorrhagic fevers. It was first discovered in 1976 in the central African country of Democratic Republic of Congo. Since then it has appeared sporadically throughout the African continent.

Currently, Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) transmission is occurring in the West African countries of Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. Case fatality rates of approximately 60% are being reported in this outbreak. Please check CDC website (<http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/outbreaks/2014-west-africa/distribution-map.html>) for an up-to-date list of affected countries.

### How is it spread (transmission)?

The reservoir or natural site where the Ebola virus exists is unknown. It is thought to be fruit bats in certain African countries which in turn infect non-human primates such as monkeys. Transmission to humans is thought to occur through butchering of infected animals for meat. Once the virus is present in human populations, modes of transmission are well known and occur via:

- Direct contact with the blood, excreta, or secretions of an infected person even after death.
- Exposure to objects (such as needles) that have been contaminated with infected secretions.

Once exposed, it takes between 2-21 days before people display signs of illness. It is only during this symptomatic period that infected individuals can spread the disease to others. People who do not have a fever or other symptoms of EVD are not contagious.

### What are the Wisconsin Division of Public Health and local health departments doing?

Local Health Departments and the DPH are providing guidance to travelers returning from EVD-affected countries by assessing their risk of exposure, monitoring their health, and recommending public health actions accordingly. These public health actions are guided by the current science and recommendations from the CDC.

In healthcare settings, the use of established standard, contact, and droplet precautions should be employed when evaluating any patient with possible EVD. These guidelines have been distributed and are widely available to the medical community. These can be found at <http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/hcp/infection-prevention-and-control-recommendations.html>

### Do we need to worry about an EVD epidemic in the U.S.?

An EVD epidemic in the United States is extremely unlikely because, unlike certain countries in Africa, the U.S. has the healthcare infrastructure -- with its attendant infection control practices -- to safely manage patients, even those who are infected with the Ebola virus. Additionally, the animal reservoirs for Ebola virus are not present in the U.S.

**Additional information is available at:** <http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/communicable/diseasepages/ebola.htm>.