

## **EBOLA: QUICK Q&A'S**

Although Baker County is at low risk for Ebola residents are encouraged to stay informed and aware of this current event. The Baker County Health Department (BCHD) is providing the following information that has been developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on the transmission, symptoms, and prevention of the Ebola virus.

### **TRANSMISSION**

Ebola is spread through direct contact (through broken skin or mucous membranes in, for example, the eyes, nose, mouth or an open cut, wound or abrasion) with:

- blood or body fluids (including but not limited to urine, saliva, sweat, feces, vomit, breast milk, and semen) of a person who is sick with Ebola
- objects (like needles and syringes) that have been contaminated with the virus
- infected animals
- Ebola is not spread through the air or by water, or in general, by food. However, in Africa, Ebola may be spread as a result of handling bushmeat (wild animals hunted for food) and contact with infected bats. There is no evidence that mosquitos or other insects can transmit Ebola virus. Only mammals (for example, humans, bats, monkeys, and apes) have shown the ability to become infected with and spread Ebola virus.

Unlike respiratory illnesses like measles or chickenpox, which can be transmitted by virus particles that remain suspended in the air after an infected person coughs or sneezes, Ebola is transmitted by direct contact with body fluids of a person who has symptoms of Ebola disease. Although coughing and sneezing are not common symptoms of Ebola, if a symptomatic patient with Ebola coughs or sneezes on someone, and saliva or mucus come into contact with that person's eyes, nose or mouth, these fluids may transmit the disease.

Ebola is killed with hospital-grade disinfectants (such as household bleach). Ebola on dried on surfaces such as doorknobs and countertops can survive for several hours; however, the virus in body fluids (such as blood) can survive up to several days at room temperature.

## **SYMPTOMS**

Symptoms include:

- Fever (greater than 38.6°C or 101.5°F)
- Severe headache
- Muscle pain
- Weakness
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Abdominal (stomach) pain
- Unexplained hemorrhage (bleeding or bruising)

Symptoms may appear anywhere from 2 to 21 days after exposure to Ebola, but the average is 8 to 10 days. Contact your primary care physician by phone if you experience any of the symptoms AND have recently traveled to, or have been in contact with someone from (Liberia, Sierra Leon, Guinea, West Africa), the affected areas.

## **PREVENTION**

There is no FDA-approved vaccine available for Ebola.

If you travel to or are in an area affected by an Ebola outbreak, make sure to do the following:

- Log on to the CDC website: <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/diseases/ebola> for up to date information on the affected areas.
- Practice careful hygiene. For example, wash your hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer and avoid contact with blood and body fluids.
- Do not handle items that may have come in contact with an infected person's blood or body fluids (such as clothes, bedding, needles, and medical equipment).
- Avoid funeral or burial rituals that require handling the body of someone who has died from Ebola.
- Avoid contact with bats and nonhuman primates or blood, fluids, and raw meat prepared from these animals.
- Avoid hospitals in West Africa where Ebola patients are being treated. The U.S. embassy or consulate is often able to provide advice on facilities.
- After you return, monitor your health for 21 days and seek medical care immediately if you develop any of the previously mentioned symptoms.