



Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency

Healthy People, Healthy Communities



Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Community Health Education about Ebola Virus Disease (EVD)

Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) is an infectious disease caused by the Ebola virus. Symptoms may appear anywhere from 2 to 21 days after exposure and include fever, headache, joint and muscle aches, weakness, diarrhea, vomiting, stomach pain, and abnormal bleeding. It is classified as a viral hemorrhagic fever (VHF) because of the fever and abnormal bleeding. Among the VHFs, Ebola is feared because of its high mortality. There are no specific treatments but supportive therapy can be provided to address bleeding and other complications.

Important facts about Ebola include:

- **People CANNOT get EVD through the air, food, or water.**
- Ebola virus is transmitted through direct contact with the blood or bodily fluids of an infected symptomatic person or through exposure to objects (such as needles) that have been contaminated.
- **Persons are not contagious until they develop symptoms.**
- Persons at highest risk for EVD include healthcare workers and family and friends of infected patients.
- Early identification of cases is crucial.
- Effective isolation of patients and appropriate infection control measures applied to any suspect EVD patient would contain any potential spread.

The risk of the spread of EVD in California is extremely low. Our advanced health care system has appropriate protocols in place to prevent the spread of this often deadly disease. While we should be aware of the disease, its symptoms and its potential, it is extremely unlikely that Ebola poses a public health risk to Californians. **At the present time, no confirmed cases have been identified in California.**

The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) works with local health jurisdictions to keep the public safe by preparing for the unlikely event that a traveler returning to California from affected countries is suspected of having Ebola Virus Disease (EVD). An important component of being prepared is early identification and testing of suspect cases and implementation of infection control practices to contain the disease.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have issued Ebola Guidelines for Nationwide hospitals. Mendocino county Hospitals have received Detailed Hospital Checklist for Ebola Preparedness. These checklists are being shared with first responders to protect Health Care responders, workers and therefore Mendocino County residents.

On August 6, 2014, CDC issued a travel alert (Level 3) advising travelers to avoid all non-essential travel to Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Liberia. On August 7, 2014, CDC issued a lower level alert (Level 2) for Nigeria advising travelers to practice enhanced precautions.

Source: California Department of Public Health <http://www.cdph.ca.gov/Pages/NR14-071.aspx>

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