



Republic of Botswana

EBOLA VIRUS DISEASE



WHAT IS EBOLA VIRUS DISEASE (EVD)?

Ebola formerly known as Ebola viral haemorrhagic fever is a human disease caused by Ebola virus. The disease makes the person to bleed uncontrollably from all the openings e.g. mouth, eyes, ears, anus, nose e.t.c. It is a severe, often fatal illness in humans.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

Symptoms of the Ebola virus show up within 2 to 21 days after someone is infected. Many of the early signs and symptoms of Ebola look like the common fever.

They include:

- Fever
- Headache
- Muscle aches
- Sore throat
- Abdominal pain
- Diarrhoea and vomiting
- Bloody rash
- Blood in the vomit
- Blood in sputum or stool
- Bleeding from the nose or other body parts
- Difficulty in breathing

TRANSMISSION

Ebola is introduced into the human population through close contact with the blood, secretions, organs or other bodily fluids of infected animals (chimpanzees, gorillas, fruit bats, monkeys, forest antelope and porcupines found ill or dead or in the rainforest).

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

These include:

- Direct physical contact with body fluids like blood, saliva, stool, vomits, urine, sweat and soiled linen of an infected person.
- Using skin piercing instruments that have been used by an infected person
- Direct physical contact with persons who have died of Ebola
- Contact with dead animals that died of Ebola.

PREVENTION

There is no vaccine to prevent Ebola. The protective measures individuals can take are the only way to reduce human infection and death. These measures include;

- To avoid unnecessary travelling to areas where the virus is found.
- Avoid direct contact with body fluids of a person suffering from Ebola by using protective materials like gloves, goggles, and masks
- Persons suspected of Ebola should be taken to the nearest health facility immediately for proper management
- Persons who have died of Ebola must be handled using strong protective wear and buried immediately (funerals should take a short time).

- Wash your hands with soap and clean water after handling a patient or the body of a person who has died of Ebola
- Avoid communal washing of hands during funerals.
- Proper disposal of instruments such as needles and syringes used on a patient.
- Disinfecting / sterilizing and washing linen and instruments before being used.

TREATMENT

No specific treatment is available but severely ill patients require intensive supportive care. Patients are frequently dehydrated and require oral rehydration solutions.

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