

## **DHEC Ebola Virus Disease Guidance for Dental Professionals**

### **What is Ebola?**

Ebola virus disease (also known as Ebola Hemorrhagic Fever) is an illness caused by one of several Ebola Virus strains. Ebola virus disease can be a severe illness with reported mortality rates ranging from 25 to 90 percent depending on the strain and available supportive care.

### **How is the Ebola virus spread?**

The Ebola virus is spread through direct contact to mucous membranes or broken skin with blood or body fluids (vomitus, stool, semen, breast milk, saliva, tears, and sweat) of a person who is sick with Ebola. It can also be transmitted by contact with objects (like needles and syringes) that have been contaminated with the virus and not properly disinfected. Ebola is not spread through the air, by water or by commonly available food products in the U.S. The virus is not transmissible during the incubation period therefore asymptomatic persons are not contagious. The average incubation period is 8 to 10 days, but symptoms may appear anywhere from 2 to 21 days after exposure to Ebola.

Ebola Virus Disease has only occurred in the U.S. in rare circumstances of disease importation and in health care workers providing care for known Ebola patients. The risk of Ebola for individuals in the general U.S. population is extremely low unless direct, unprotected contact with the blood or body fluids of a person who is sick with Ebola Virus Disease occurs. Health care workers caring for known EVD patients are among those at the highest risk of exposures resulting in infection.

### **Prevention of Ebola infection:**

It is highly unlikely that someone with Ebola will seek dental care because the disease is rare in the U.S. However, to reduce the risk of unrecognized exposure, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the ADA Division of Science, and DHEC advise dental professionals as follows:

- Take a medical history, including a travel history from their patients with symptoms for which a viral infection is suspected. Any person within 21 days of returning from an Ebola affected country may be at risk of having contacted persons infected with Ebola and may not exhibit symptoms (**Link to CDC most up-to-date countries affected with Ebola** <http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/outbreaks/2014-west-africa/distribution-map.html>).
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- If there is a disclosed risk, consider delaying routine dental care for the patient until 21 days have elapsed from the time of their departure from the affected region.
- Palliative care for serious oral health conditions, dental infections and pain can be provided if necessary, after consulting with the patient's physician and conforming to standard infection control precautions, including PPE for droplet precautions and physical barriers.

All health care providers should have access to and be trained to appropriately use PPE that is indicated for their work setting. High-level personal protective equipment (PPE) is recommended for health care workers in facilities with known or suspected EVD patients. Health care workers in ambulatory care settings, including dental professionals, are at low risk for exposure to Ebola. High-level PPE is not currently recommended in ambulatory care settings unless ongoing care will be provided for someone suspected to have Ebola. The recommended PPE for potential low-risk exposures includes a minimum of waterproof disposable gloves, face mask, and eye protection such as face shield (preferred) or goggles to avoid contact with body fluids.

### **Ebola Screening in Dental Practices**

The initial symptoms of Ebola are non-specific and can mimic other common infections. The most common signs and symptoms of Ebola infection are:

- fever (greater than 38.0°C or 100.4°F)
- severe headache
- muscle pain
- vomiting
- diarrhea
- stomach pain or unexplained bleeding or bruising

Dental patients who report any of the above symptoms should be asked about a history of travel in the last 21 days to an Ebola affected country (**Link to CDC most up-to-date countries affected with Ebola** <http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/outbreaks/2014-west-africa/distribution-map.html>). Symptomatic individuals without a relevant travel history should be managed with routine medical procedures. Special precautions for Ebola are not indicated.

Patients with symptoms and a history of travel to an affected region in the last 21 days are considered as having some risk for Ebola exposure and require additional medical evaluation to determine possible causes for their illness. Dental professionals and staff in contact with the patient should:

- Immediately protect themselves by using standard precautions with physical barriers (gowns, masks, face protection, and gloves)
- Ensure that the patient is isolated away from other patients in the office and minimize the number of staff interacting with the patient.
- Immediately contact the regional DHEC Epidemiology office for assistance with decisions about additional Ebola risk assessment.

### **Resources:**

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Ebola Information <http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/>

American Dental Association Ebola Resources

<http://www.ada.org/en/member-center/oral-health-topics/ebola-resources>

OSAP Ebola Toolkit <http://www.osap.org/?page=ebola>

CDC Division of Oral Health: Infection Control

[http://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/infectioncontrol/fag/protective\\_equipment.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/infectioncontrol/fag/protective_equipment.htm)

Sequence for Donning and Removing Personal Protective Equipment

<http://www.cdc.gov/hai/pdfs/ppe/PPE-Sequence.pdf> (DHEC Division of Oral Health recommends using example 2 for removing personal protective equipment)

Evaluating Patients for Possible Ebola Virus Disease: Recommendations for Healthcare Personnel and Health Officials <http://emergency.cdc.gov/han/han00371.asp>

Recommended Infection Control Practices for Dentistry

<http://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/infectioncontrol/guidelines/index.htm>

Organization for Safety, Asepsis and Prevention (OSAP) Ebola Toolkit

<http://www.osap.org/?page=Ebola#Regs>

Ebola virus disease Information for Clinicians in U.S. Healthcare Settings

<http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/hcp/clinician-information-us-healthcare-settings.html>

Risk of Exposure <http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/exposure/index.html>

Ebola Medical Waste Management <http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/hcp/medical-waste-management.html>

CDC Travel Health Notices <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices>

## Regional Public Health Offices – 2014

Call reports to the Epidemiology Office in each Public Health Region.

### LOW COUNTRY PUBLIC HEALTH REGION

#### **Berkeley, Charleston, Dorchester**

4050 Bridge View Drive, Suite 600  
N. Charleston, SC 29405  
Phone: (843) 953-0043  
Fax: (843) 953-0051  
Nights / Weekends: (843) 441-1091

#### **Beaufort, Colleton, Hampton, Jasper**

219 S. Lemacks Street  
Walterboro, SC 29488  
Phone: (843) 549-1516  
Fax: (843) 549-6845  
Nights / Weekends: (843) 441-1091

#### **Allendale, Bamberg, Calhoun, Orangeburg**

932 Holly Street  
Holly Hill, SC 29059  
Phone: (803) 300-2270  
Fax: (843) 549-6845  
Nights / Weekends: (843) 441-1091

### MIDLANDS PUBLIC HEALTH REGION

#### **Kershaw, Lexington, Newberry, Richland**

2000 Hampton Street  
Columbia, SC 29204  
Phone: (803) 576-2749  
Fax: (803) 576-2993  
Nights / Weekends: (888) 801-1046

#### **Chester, Fairfield, Lancaster, York**

PO Box 817  
1833 Pageland Highway  
Lancaster, SC 29720  
Phone: (803) 286-9948  
Fax: (803) 286-5418  
Nights / Weekends: (888) 801-1046

#### **Aiken, Barnwell, Edgefield, Saluda**

222 Beaufort Street, NE  
Aiken, SC 29801  
Phone: (803) 642-1618  
Fax: (803) 643-8386  
Nights / Weekends: (888) 801-1046

### PEE DEE PUBLIC HEALTH REGION

#### **Chesterfield, Darlington, Dillon, Florence,**

#### **Marlboro, Marion**

145 E. Cheves Street  
Florence, SC 29506  
Phone: (843) 661-4830  
Fax: (843) 661-4859  
Nights / Weekends: (843) 915-8845

#### **Clarendon, Lee, Sumter**

PO Box 1628  
105 North Magnolia Street  
Sumter, SC 29150  
Phone: (803) 773-5511  
Fax: (803) 775-9941  
Nights/Weekends: (843) 915-8845

#### **Georgetown, Horry, Williamsburg**

1931 Industrial Park Road  
Conway, SC 29526-5482  
Phone: (843) 915-8804  
Fax: (843) 915-6502  
Nights/Weekends: (843) 915-8845

### UPSTATE PUBLIC HEALTH REGION

#### **Anderson, Oconee**

220 McGee Road  
Anderson, SC 29625  
Phone: (864) 260-5801  
Fax: (864) 260-5623  
Nights / Weekends: (866) 298-4442

#### **Abbeville, Greenwood, Laurens, McCormick**

1736 S. Main Street  
Greenwood, SC 29646  
Phone: (864) 227-5947  
Fax: (864) 953-6313  
Nights / Weekends: (866) 298-4442

#### **Cherokee, Greenville, Pickens**

PO Box 2507  
200 University Ridge  
Greenville, SC 29602-2507  
Phone: (864) 372-3133  
Fax: (864) 282-4373  
Nights / Weekends: (866) 298-4442

### UPSTATE PUBLIC HEALTH REGION (continued)

#### **Spartanburg, Union**

PO Box 2507  
200 University Ridge  
Greenville, SC 29602-2507  
Phone: (864) 372-3133  
Fax: (864) 282-4373  
Nights / Weekends: (866) 298-4442

### **DHEC Bureau of Disease Control Division of Acute Disease Epidemiology**

1751 Calhoun Street  
Box 101106  
Columbia, SC 29211  
Phone: (803) 898-0861  
Fax: (803) 898-0897  
Nights / Weekends: 1-888-847-0902



[www.scdhec.gov](http://www.scdhec.gov)