

Information about Ebola for Schools and Day Care Centers

1) What are the symptoms of Ebola?

- Fever (greater than 38.0°C or 100.4°F) - this is the most common symptom
- 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 a person who is ill with Ebola, but the average is 8 to 10 days.

2) Who is at risk for catching Ebola?

The outbreak is occurring in the countries of Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Liberia in West Africa. People who have been in those countries and who have had contact with people with Ebola are at the highest risk of becoming ill with Ebola.

3) Is everyone traveling from Guinea, Sierra Leon and Liberia at risk for Ebola?

No. People who have been in these countries in the past 21 days but were not around people who have Ebola are at very low risk of developing Ebola. However, people who have been in these countries in the past 21 days should be assessed for risk of developing Ebola and monitor for symptoms of Ebola.

4) Do students or children in day care need to be excluded if someone in their household or a close contact recently returned from Guinea, Sierra Leone, or Liberia within the last 21 days?

No. In this situation, the student/daycare child poses no risk to others at the school or day care.

If a student or day care child is found to have been exposed to a confirmed case of Ebola, the student or child will be put into quarantine before they would be at risk for spreading this virus to others or contaminating the environment. Public Health officials are responsible for assessing who has been exposed or potentially exposed to the Ebola virus, determining what actions are appropriate, and ensuring those actions are carried out. These actions will protect others in the community.

5) What is isolation?

Isolation (isolating a person from contact with other people) is done when a person has symptoms of a disease and could potentially spread this disease to others. It is most often done in a health care setting since the person is ill.



6) What is quarantine?

Quarantine (quarantining a person away from contact with other people) is done when a susceptible person has been exposed to a disease, but is not ill. This is typically done at the person's home, and continues for one incubation period after the last time the person was exposed to the disease (21 days in the case of Ebola).

7) What should schools or day care centers do if they suspect they have a student or child with Ebola (or a student exposed to Ebola)?

Immediately contact the South Dakota Department of Health at 800-592-1861 for guidance.

8) Is there an Ebola vaccine?

Currently there is no vaccine for Ebola.

9) How do we clean environmental surfaces?

No disinfectants are specifically recommended for use against Ebola; however, disinfectants labeled for use on non-enveloped viruses (i.e. norovirus, rotavirus, adenovirus or poliovirus) are effective against Ebola, and can be used on surfaces thought to be contaminated. No additional cleaning measures are recommended at this time for Ebola; however, as the influenza season is about to begin, additional cleaning of frequently touched surfaces should be considered to reduce the spread of influenza.

Additional Information

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - <http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/>
- South Dakota Department of Health – <http://doh.sd.gov/diseases/Ebola.aspx>
1-800-592-1861