



### **What is Ebola?**

Ebola, previously known as Ebola hemorrhagic fever, is a severe, often fatal disease. The first known case of Ebola with illness onset and laboratory confirmation in the United States occurred in Dallas, Texas, on September 30, 2014, in a traveler from Liberia. **At this time Ebola does not pose a significant risk to the U.S. population**, but the medical and public health community across the country is taking it very seriously, working to ensure systems are in place to identify, isolate, test and treat people with Ebola-like symptoms and prevent the disease from spreading.

### **How is Ebola transmitted?**

- Ebola is spread from one person to another through broken skin or unprotected mucous membranes such as the eyes, nose, or mouth. This can happen when there is:
  - Direct contact with the blood or body fluids (including but not limited to feces, saliva, urine, vomit sweat, breast milk and semen) of a person who is sick with Ebola.
  - Contact with objects (like needles and syringes) that have been contaminated with the blood or body fluids of an infected person or with infected animals.
- Ebola does not spread easily through casual contact.
- Ebola is not spread through food, water or air.
- A person infected with Ebola cannot pass it to others until symptoms appear.

### **What are the signs and symptoms of Ebola?**

Symptoms of Ebola may appear anywhere from 2 to 21 days after being exposed to the Ebola virus and typically include: Fever (greater than 38.6°C or 101.5°F), severe headache, muscle pain, vomiting, diarrhea, stomach pain, unexplained bleeding or bruising.

### **Who is at risk of contracting Ebola?**

The people most at risk of contracting Ebola are healthcare workers, families and friends who come into close contact with the blood or body fluids (see above) of people infected with Ebola.

### **How is Ebola treated?**

Currently there are no specific vaccines or medicines (such as antiviral drugs) that have been proven to be effective against Ebola. Symptoms of Ebola are treated as they appear. The following basic interventions, when used early, can significantly improve the chances of survival:

- Providing intravenous (IV) fluids and balancing electrolytes (body salts)
- Maintaining oxygen status and blood pressure
- Treating other infections if they occur

### **What is the Cook County Department of Public Health (CCDPH) doing about Ebola?**

- CCDPH continues to provide guidance to suburban Cook County (SCC) healthcare systems on the evaluation and case management of suspect and confirmed cases of Ebola to reduce the chance of transmission and limit the potential spread of the disease.
- CCDPH will continue the primary function of public health which is to monitor for the spread of disease and intervene to eliminate the risk of transmission to the public through routine surveillance and working closely with state and other local health officials.
- CCDPH officials understand the situation is concerning even with the limited risk Ebola poses to SCC residents and will continue to provide updates to our residents via [www.cookcountypublichealth.org](http://www.cookcountypublichealth.org) and through social media at facebook/CCDPH or Twitter/CookCoHealth.

### **Where can I get more information about Ebola?**

- For more information about Ebola, please visit the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at: [www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola](http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola).