

Ebola Haemorrhagic Fever

Identification

After a person is exposed to the Ebola virus there will be an onset of illness characterized by fever, headache, joint and muscle ache, sore throat, and weakness. Following these symptoms are diarrhea, vomiting, and stomach pain. Rash, red eyes, hiccups and internal and external bleeding may be seen in some patients. The kidney and the liver can become impaired as well. There are also laboratory findings show low counts of white blood cells and platelets as well as elevated liver enzymes.

Infectious agents

The Ebola virus is the cause of the disease. One of the seven gene product in the Ebola virus, a glycoprotein that extends out from the surface of the virus, is apparently responsible for the toxic effect.

Methods of Transmission

Infection with Ebola virus is acute. Ebola virus is transmitted by direct contact with blood, body fluids, and tissue of infectious person; it can also be transmitted by handling ill or dead infected chimpanzees. Infection can also spread by contact with objects exposed or contaminated with the virus. How the first human appeared with Ebola HF has not been determined, however researchers hypothesize the first human patient became infected through contact with an infected animal.

Occurrence

The natural reservoir of Ebola virus remains unknown. Base on evidence and nature of similar viruses, researchers believe that the virus is zoonotic (animal-borne). The virus is normally in a animal host that is native to the African continent. Confirmed causes of the Ebola virus have been reported in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon, Sudan, the Ivory Coast, Uganda, and the Republic of the Congo. There is no report yet filed of the viral infection in human in the United States. These outbreaks typically appear in and spread within a health-care setting.

Incubation period

It takes from two to twenty-two days after infection for the Ebola virus to produce symptoms.

Reservoir

Primates and human are the two that have reports of Ebola infection. Ebola-Reston is the virus only found in primates and not human and Ebola-Zaire,

Ebola-Sudan, and Ebola-Ivory Coast are the types of Ebola that are found in human cases.

Methods of control

There is not yet a cure or vaccine for the Ebola Haemorrhagic Fever but there are prevention strategies.

- 1) Suspected cases should be isolated from other patients and strict barrier
- 2) Contact tracing and follow-up of the people who may have been exposed to Ebola
- 3) All hospital personnel should be informed about the nature of the disease and its routes of transmission
- 4) Hospital staff should have individual gown, gloves, masks, and goggles. Non-disposable protective equipments must not be reused unless properly disinfected
- 5) Infection may also be spread through contact with soiled clothing or bed linens from a patient with Ebola, therefore disinfection is required before handling these items
- 6) Communities affected by Ebola should make an effort to inform the population, about the nature of Ebola and about the necessary outbreak containment measure
- 7) People who have died from Ebola should be promptly and safely buried