



Ebola – Understanding the Facts

BULLETIN

Due to recent news events regarding Ebola, we are releasing a brief fact sheet regarding this issue.

Don't Panic

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Ebola is not spread through casual contact; therefore, the risk of an outbreak in the U.S. is very low. Ebola can only be contracted in the following manner:

- By touching the blood or body fluids of a person who is sick with or has died from Ebola.
- By touching contaminated objects, like needles.
- By touching infected animals, their blood or other body fluids, or their meat.
- **You cannot get Ebola through air, water or food.**

Symptoms of Ebola Include:

- Fever (greater than **38.6°C or 101.5°F**)
- Abdominal (stomach) pain
- Unexplained hemorrhage (bleeding or bruising)
- Diarrhea
- Severe headache
- Muscle pain
- Weakness
- Vomiting

Symptoms may appear anywhere from 2 to 21 days after exposure to Ebola, but the average is 8 to 10 days.

Is it Ebola or the Flu?

USA Today provides a nice visual for comparing symptoms of Ebola with those of influenza.

Click here:

<http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation-now/2014/10/15/ebola-flu-symptoms-sick/17309147/>



Stay Current

This is an evolving news story, the most current and accurate Ebola data can be found by checking the following links on a consistent basis:

CDC: www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola

World Health Organization: www.who.int/en

Cal OSHA: www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/EbolaVirusInformation.htm

Please share the attached "Facts About Ebola" flier with your colleagues, friends and family

SAFETY COMMUNICATION



Public Transit: APTA Discussion Points

From the American Public Transportation Association (APTA)

The public transportation industry is closely monitoring this public health issue and will work with the **Center for Disease Control** as well as coordinate with the **U.S. DOT** to take appropriate precautionary actions, if necessary.

- It should be stressed that there have been **NO reported incidents** of a person infected with Ebola traveling on a city bus or train.
- There is no CDC directive on actions that public transit systems should take, although public transit systems are already diligent about cleaning their vehicles.

Emergencies:

Public transit systems have long-standing protocols for handling sick passengers and blood-borne incidents. Systems and personnel handle such incidents on a regular basis and immediately call emergency medical personnel through two-radios on vehicles.

Q: Are public transit systems changing what they do?

A: Every public transit system will assess their local situation and respond accordingly. Systems are also reinforcing with their employees the proper procedures and safety actions to take if a situation arises.

For example, the **Fort Worth Transportation Authority (the T)**, has decided to intensify the cleaning of its buses. Every night the surfaces on buses that people touch are being scrubbed down with disinfectant. Also, instead of taking a bus out of service every quarter for a more detailed scrubbing, buses will now be removed every six weeks for a more detailed cleaning.

The T has already been using an *ultraviolet-light system* in its heating and air conditioning units on the buses that kills germs and virus-carrying particulates.

In Dallas, the **Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART)** vehicles are cleaned every time they come in from revenue service, so in some cases that means they are cleaned twice daily. DART previously established protocols for a biohazard and blood borne pathogen situation and has met with its staff and contractors to make sure the protocols are followed, including use of the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE). DART vehicles are also routinely taken out of service if there is a biohazard incident (someone throws up, for example) onboard. Additionally, vehicles also receive more detailed cleaning on a regular basis.

Q: What kinds of advice do you have for people who ride public transit?

A: We remind passengers that the risk of contracting the Ebola virus is very low, and that it is not an airborne virus like the flu. We always advise people to take precautionary measures and wash their hands frequently.