



FCBT update: The Ebola Virus Disease

When it comes to travel, we mean business.

The Ebola crisis has dominated the news in recent weeks and it is clearly a serious issue for the global community.

For travelers the risk of contracting Ebola is extremely low, however all experts agree this crisis will be with us at least for the medium term. FCBT is constantly monitoring the situation and this fact sheet is intended to answer a few common questions being asked by travelers.

What is Ebola?

Ebola belongs to a group of diseases referred to as 'viral hemorrhagic fevers', which also includes Dengue Fever and Yellow Fever. Hemorrhagic means these diseases can involve bleeding.

What are the symptoms?

Symptoms can start within two days after someone is exposed to the virus, with the incubation period ranging from two to 21 days. Symptoms include feeling weak, fever, muscle/joint pain, headache and sore throat. Vomiting, diarrhea, rash and abdominal pain follow in most cases. Internal and external bleeding can also occur.

How does Ebola spread?

The disease can spread from person to person, or to people from animals or bats. The virus is contained in the blood and body fluids of infected people. If someone has contact with an infected person's body fluids, they can get Ebola.

How do I prevent infection?

- Always maintain strict hygiene measures and avoid direct unprotected contact with sick people.

- Wash your hands frequently and avoid touching your face.
- When traveling avoid touching blood, body fluids or secretions of other people.

Which countries are affected?

The main Ebola affected countries include Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. The Democratic Republic of the Congo and Nigeria are also being watched closely. All travelers are strongly advised to defer non-essential travel to these countries.

Are travelers being screened?

Many airports are now screening passengers arriving from Ebola affected countries including Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea. People leaving these countries are also being screened before they fly. Screening is currently underway at airports in the US, Canada and Britain (plus the Eurostar rail terminal in London). It is likely that more countries will commence screening in the coming days and weeks.

What does passenger screening involve?

Travelers may experience delays as a result of airport screening with airport officials permitted to isolate passengers if necessary, evaluate and monitor a person's condition. Screening includes a visual assessment of illness, a temperature check by a non-contact thermometer and detailed questioning on arrival. Fact sheets are also being distributed to those who have traveled to nations affected by the outbreak.

Are airlines still flying to affected areas?

Some international airlines, including

British Airways, Emirates Air and Kenya Airways, have suspended flights and charter air movements are extremely limited in affected countries. However other airlines still have regular departures to destinations in West Africa. Travelers to other destinations are not expected to experience any disruptions.

Ebola facts

- You can't get Ebola through the air or water.
- There are four strains of Ebola virus that affect humans. They are named after the region where they were first detected: Bundibugyo, Tai Forest (previously known as Ivory Coast), Sudan and Zaire.
- The first known Ebola outbreak occurred in the Democratic Republic of Congo (formerly Zaire) in 1976.
- The current outbreak is caused by the Zaire strain, which is the most virulent strain.

How to stay informed

As the situation is changing from day-to-day all business travelers are advised to keep up to date with the latest developments. For more information and the latest updates visit:

World Health Organization

www.who.int/ijet
www.ijet.com/index.php/health-intel-ebola-alert

For all travel-related inquiries on this matter please contact your FCBT team.



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