

06 September 2025 | NCDC Public Health Advisory following the Announcement of an Ebola Virus Disease Outbreak in DR Congo

The Ministry of Health in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has confirmed an outbreak of the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) in the Kasai Province, where 28 suspected cases and 15 deaths, including four health workers, have been reported, as of 4 September 2025.

The outbreak has affected the Bulape and Mweka health zones, where investigations revealed symptoms including fever, vomiting, diarrhoea, and haemorrhage (bleeding). Samples tested at the National Institute of Biomedical Research in Kinshasa confirmed the Ebola Zaire virus as causative strain. The mortality rate is estimated at 57%, although investigations and laboratory analyses are ongoing to refine the situation.

It is pertinent to note that the DRC has experience in responding to Ebola outbreaks and has immediately activated the Public Health Emergency Operations Centre. A National Rapid Response Team, supported by the World Health Organization (WHO), has been deployed to the Kasai Province to strengthen disease surveillance, infection prevention and control (IPC), laboratory diagnostics, and case management. Importantly, the Ebola Zaire strain responsible for this outbreak has an approved vaccine – Ervebo – which is effective in preventing infection. We will continue to monitor the regional and global situations.

There are no cases of Ebola virus disease in Nigeria, as at now. However, the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (NCDC), in collaboration with relevant Ministries, Departments, Agencies, and Partners, continue to monitor disease occurrence and initiate measures to strengthen our preparedness in the country. Ongoing effort includes heightened surveillance especially at our borders and points of entry. There are also on-going efforts to strengthen infection prevention and control measures in healthcare facilities across the country. Our risk communication and community engagement structures have also been alerted to ensure timely and accurate information is provided to Nigerians as well as track and address perceptions, rumours and misinformation.

ABOUT EBOLA VIRUS DISEASE

Ebola virus disease (EVD), formerly known as Ebola Haemorrhagic Fever, is a severe, often deadly disease caused by the Ebola virus, with a fatality rate of 25-90%. There are 5 distinct species of this Virus: Bundibugyo, Reston, Tai Forest, Sudan, and the Zaire (the one responsible for the current case in the DRC).

How is Ebola Virus Disease Transmitted

People become infected with Ebola either through contact with infected live or dead animals (usually following butchering, cooking or eating) or through contact with the body fluids of infected humans. Most cases are caused by human-to-human transmission which occurs when blood or bodily fluids or secretions (stool, urine, semen) of infected people enter a person's body through broken skin or mucous membranes. During an outbreak, those at higher risk of infection are health workers, family members or others in close contact with the deceased, infected people and mourners who have direct contact with bodies during burial rituals.

The incubation period, i.e. the time interval from infection to the development of signs and symptoms, ranges from 2-21 days.

Signs and symptoms

Ebola symptoms vary but commonly experienced symptoms are:

- Sudden onset of fever, intense weakness, muscle pain, headache and sore throat are commonly experienced at the beginning of the disease.
- Other symptoms that follow are vomiting and diarrhoea and yellowness of the eyes.

The following may occur in severe cases:

- **Uncontrolled bleeding from body orifices, dysfunction and / or failure of several body organs** such as the **kidneys, liver**, also the central nervous system may become involved with eventual progressing to shock and death.

In fatal cases, death often occurs between 8 and 9 days of the onset of symptoms.

NCDC'S ADVICE TO NIGERIANS

There are vaccines and therapeutics available for some strains of the Ebola virus. However, early recognition, isolation of patients, and initiation of supportive treatment reduce morbidity and probability of death. Equally important is the implementation of infection and control measures in health facilities and homes, tracing and monitoring of contacts, and safe burial practices which all significantly reduce the transmission of the disease from one person to the other.

Nigerians are therefore urged to adhere strictly to the following preventive measures:

- Practice good hand hygiene - **Wash your hands regularly** with soap under running water or **use hand sanitizers** when soap and water are not readily available.
- Avoid physical contact with anyone who has symptoms of an infection with an unknown diagnosis, similar to those earlier mentioned.
- Reduce the risk of wildlife to human transmission from contact with infected fruit bats or monkeys/apes and the consumption of raw meat. Animals should be handled with gloves and other appropriate protective clothing. Animal products should be thoroughly cooked before consumption.
- Avoid **direct contact** with the blood, saliva, vomit, urine, and other bodily fluids of suspected or confirmed EVD cases.
- If you or someone you know (with a travel history to any country with Ebola cases) experiences symptoms of EVD enumerated above, call **6232** or your **State Ministry of Health hotline IMMEDIATELY** for guidance.

ADVICE TO HEALTHCARE WORKERS

Our Healthcare workers are advised to maintain a high index of suspicion for EVD in their encounter with their patients. All health workers in all hospitals should practice standard precautions at all times. And when managing a suspected or confirmed case of EVD the following should be adhered to:

- Ensure strict **isolation** of the patient(s).
- Adhere strictly to **infection prevention and control (IPC) measures**, including the use of appropriate **personal protective equipment (PPE)** like **face masks, hand gloves**, appropriate **gowns**, safe sharps disposal etc.
- Report suspected cases immediately to the NCDC or State Ministry of Health for appropriate response and management.

TRAVEL ADVICE

The NCDC advises Nigerian citizens and residents to **AVOID ALL BUT ESSENTIAL TRAVEL** to countries with confirmed cases of Ebola virus disease. Persons already in Nigeria but with recent travel history to or transit through countries with Ebola cases in the last **21 days** who experience symptoms such as fever, muscle pain, sore throat, diarrhoea, weakness, vomiting, stomach pain, or unexplained bleeding or bruising should adhere to the following guidelines:

- Promptly call **6232** or State Ministry of Health hotlines for assessment and testing.
- Shelter-in-place to avoid further spread through shared transport systems (public or private) until health authorities reach out.
- Await dedicated responders for assessment and possible transport to a designated treatment centre if required.

On our part, we will continue to strengthen surveillance across the country, including our borders and airports especially for travellers from affected areas; alerting our health workers to heighten their level of suspicion for suspected cases; enhancing our laboratory capacities for quick testing of suspected cases; as well coordination with the WHO and the African Regional Health Authorities to monitor developments and share critical information.

As you are aware, we continue to manage several other disease outbreaks, like Lassa fever, Meningitis, Diphtheria, Mpox, Measles and Anthrax, ravaging our communities. We will continue to provide periodic updates on these.

CONTACT

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NCDC Media Releases

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