

Coping with worry about Ebola

Factsheet

It is normal to be concerned about Ebola especially when others around you are worried and uncertain. If you are fearful about Ebola, get the facts to calm your fears.

Positive actions you can take

Be willing to get accurate information about Ebola so you do not confuse misinformation and rumour with the truth about the disease. For Ebola information in Manitoba you can go to the provincial public health website at: <http://www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/diseases/ebola.html> or you can call Health Links - Info Santé anytime at 204-788-8200 or toll-free at 1-888-315-9257.

Keep the situation in perspective. Although Ebola is an illness that is being taken very seriously by public health authorities worldwide, do not let your worry about this disease control your life.

It is important to keep in mind how large the continent of Africa is. Africa is more than 20% bigger than all of North America. The Ebola outbreak is found within a very small area within the western region of the continent of Africa. In addition, travelers from countries affected by Ebola do not arrive directly in Manitoba. They are screened at major airports in other countries and again when arriving in Canada. As part of enhanced border measures implemented by the Government of Canada, local public health also monitors all travelers arriving from affected countries, and gives them instructions on what to do if they get symptoms.

Be compassionate towards others who have friends and family in Africa, especially West Africa. They may have loved ones far away that are impacted by the disease.

Actions to avoid

Do not change your behaviour towards people who are (or who you believe may be) from West Africa. Remember that a person is not more at risk from Ebola because of their race or country of origin. Sometimes fear can cause people to behave in ways they normally would not towards another group of people. This is called “stigmatization”. Stigmatization occurs when negative beliefs are associated with a group of people and negative actions are directed towards them based on incorrect information or stereotypes.

Avoiding certain locations, social settings, or holding back children from school has no health benefit. Remember, the chances of Ebola coming to Manitoba are very low.

Where to get reliable health-related information

When you have questions about things that may affect your health or the health of your loved ones, it is helpful to get reliable information that can help you to understand the risks. Some of the best places to get general health-related information, including information on Ebola, are:

1. Manitoba Health, Healthy Living and Seniors <http://www.gov.mb.ca/health/>
2. The Public Health Agency of Canada <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/index-eng.php>
3. Health Links – Info Santé 204-788-8200 or toll-free at 1-888-315-9257