

# Info for Household Members of a Person being Monitored for Ebola Virus Disease

Public Health - Factsheet

---

## Why has someone in my home been given an order to report to public health?

Your household member has been given an order to report to public health because it is possible they were exposed to Ebola during a recent trip to a country where Ebola is found. The order means they must contact local public health staff, who will monitor them for symptoms of Ebola.

Because Ebola symptoms can start from two to 21 days after exposure, local public health staff will be monitoring them for symptoms for 21 days. People can catch Ebola after coming into contact with bodily fluids such as blood, urine (pee), feces (poop), vomit, saliva (spit), sweat or semen from a person who has Ebola.

## What will local public health staff do?

Public health monitoring will include checking the person to see if their temperature is normal and that there are no symptoms of Ebola. More information on this is included in the kit provided by the quarantine officer.

If your household member becomes sick during the 21 days, they will be taken by ambulance to a hospital for care. Going to the hospital in the early stages of their illness means a better chance for them to get well and less chance of them spreading Ebola to other household members.

If your household member does not get sick during the 21 days, they will no longer be considered at risk. Public health staff will stop monitoring.

## Am I at risk of getting Ebola?

The risk of getting Ebola in Manitoba is very low. However, it is normal to be worried about Ebola, especially when a household member is being monitored by public health. Just because someone has recently been to an affected country does not mean they will become sick. You can't get Ebola from someone who has no symptoms.

Even if your household member becomes sick, it does not mean it is Ebola. Public Health monitors people coming from affected countries as a precaution, and has plans about what to do if someone gets sick. That is why this order to report is in place.

## What precautions should my household take?

Continue to use basic personal hygiene and household cleaning practices like:

- Washing your hands regularly with soap and running water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer, especially after going to the bathroom or before preparing, serving or eating food.
- Flushing body wastes like urine (pee) and feces (poop) down the toilet. The bathroom may be cleaned using regular household cleaners and disinfectants.
- Washing used towels, bedding and other laundry as usual.
- Disposing of other household waste, such as tissues, as you normally would.

# Info for Household Members of a Person being Monitored for Ebola Virus Disease

---

## What should I do if my household member gets sick?

Call 911 and tell them that your household member is sick and is being monitored for Ebola. Do not bring the sick person to the hospital or a clinic yourself.

## If my household member gets sick, what should I do after calling 911?

- **Do NOT touch** or come into any contact with the blood or other body fluids (like urine, feces, saliva, vomit, sweat and semen) of the person who is sick.
- **Do NOT handle** items (like clothes, towels, bedding, needles or medical equipment) that may have come into contact with the blood or body fluids of the person who is sick.
- **Keep household pets like dogs or cats away** from the sick person to prevent them from coming into contact with the sick person's blood and body fluids. Any other animals should also be kept away from the person who is sick.
- **Do NOT try to clean** areas that are soiled with the blood or body fluids (like vomit, diarrhea or urine) of the sick person. Avoid the area that has been soiled, and if possible keep the door to the room closed. Public health staff will give you information on who to call for the clean-up if necessary.
- **Public health staff will contact your household within the next 24 hours with additional information.**

## What will happen once the ambulance comes?

The household member who is sick will be taken to the hospital to find out whether or not they have Ebola and to be properly cared for if they have Ebola.

## Can I go with my household member in the ambulance to the hospital?

No, unless the household member is a minor. The ambulance attendants need to devote all of their time to your household member.

## What should I do after my household member is transported to a hospital?

Public health staff will contact you within 24 hours with further information and resources.

## If my household member has Ebola, will I get sick?

Just because someone who has recently been to an affected country is sick, it doesn't mean they have Ebola. Ebola is not easy to spread. It is not spread through the air, by water or in general, by food. Ebola can spread by contact with body fluids, primarily blood, vomit and feces of infected people; some animals (bats, monkeys and apes in Central or West Africa); or medical equipment that was in contact with infected body fluids, like needles.

The risk of getting sick is low if you have not been in contact with the blood or body fluids of the person who is sick. The risk of getting sick is higher if you have had contact with the blood and body fluids of the sick person.

# Info for Household Members of a Person being Monitored for Ebola Virus Disease

---

Public health nurses will be checking up on all of the other household member for 21 days if your household member has Ebola. If any other household member becomes sick during this time, someone in the household should call 911 so that the sick person can be taken to the hospital right away to get proper care.

## How is Ebola diagnosed?

Ebola is diagnosed by a blood test. Because the National Microbiology Lab is in Winnipeg, lab results are known quickly.

## Can Ebola be cured?

People can recover from Ebola when they receive proper and timely medical care for their symptoms. Scientists are working to develop a vaccine and treatment options for Ebola.

## What about my pet?

It is not known if an animal's body, feet or fur can act as a carrier to spread Ebola to people or other animals. If any animals (pets, service animals or farm animals) have been exposed directly to the sick person or to any body fluids of the sick person, it should be reported immediately to the Office of the Chief Veterinarian in Manitoba (204-470-1108).

Any exposed animal will be handled on a case-by-case basis. Depending on the nature of the exposure, an animal may require quarantine.

## Where can I get more information on Ebola?

- For Ebola information in Manitoba, visit: <http://www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/diseases/ebola.html> .
- The Public Health Agency of Canada <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/index-eng.php>

**If you or a household member is feeling extremely anxious or stressed and it is affecting daily life, you can contact the following organizations:**

- Klinik Community Health Centre 24-hour Crisis Line at 204-786-8686 in Winnipeg or toll-free elsewhere at 1-888-322-3019.
- Manitoba Farm and Rural Support Service toll-free at 1-866-367-3276 (1-866-FOR-FARM).
- Health Links – Info Santé can help find appropriate resources through the local regional health authority at 204-788-8200 or toll-free at 1-888-315-9257.