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Outbreak of the Ebola virus disease (EVD) (Bundibugyo virus) in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Uganda

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Highlights
- **The Ebola virus disease (EVD) is a major viral disease that can cause a hemorrhagic fever.**
- **Temporary border measures were implemented by the Government of Canada on May 30, 2026.**
- **The risk of the virus being introduced into Canada by an infectious traveller is very low.**
- **No cases of Ebola have been reported in Canada thus far.**

Context

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Uganda have been experiencing an EVD outbreak since May 15, 2026. Furthermore, the DRC zones concerned are already coping with critical insecurity, a humanitarian crisis and a mobility of the population.

Given the circumstances, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC) on May 17, 2026.

Travel advisories issued for foreign travellers and border measures are currently in force. For further details, see the Web page Ebola disease: Prevention and risks (Health Canada).

The likelihood of the virus entering Canada through an infectious traveller is very low.

Epidemiology

The Bundibugyo version of the Ebola virus, responsible for the current outbreak in the DRC and Uganda, was identified for the first time, in Uganda, and this subsequent to an outbreak in 2007-2008. Its initial identification was followed by a second outbreak, this one in the DRC, in 2012.

As of June 6, 2026, 515 confirmed cases and 91 confirmed deaths had been reported in the DRC. The numbers for Uganda were 19 confirmed cases and 2 confirmed deaths. The number of cases shifted extremely quickly, based on the information sources and reporting periods. For updated information, please visit the WHO website.: Alert and Response.

No cases of Ebola have been reported in Canada thus far.

Clinical presentation

The Ebola virus disease (EVD) is a severe viral infection that can lead to hemorrhagic fever. The incubation period is considered as being between 2 and 21 days but is usually between 8 and 10 days. EVD initially presents with a fever, shivers, fatigue, aching muscles, headaches and a sore throat. For further details, see the Government of Québec's page on the Ebola virus disease, Maladie à virus Ebola – Information pour les professionnels de la santé | Gouvernement du Québec (currently available in French only).

TRANSLATION

The Bundibugyo virus disease is particularly severe, with a mortality rate of anywhere between 30% and 50%. At present, there are no known treatments or cures for the disease, nor any vaccines able to prevent it. The rVSVΔG-ZEBOV-GP vaccine, administered during Ebola outbreaks in Zaire, is not effective against the Bundibugyo Ebola virus.

Transmission

An infected person is considered contagious once symptoms appear. The Bundibugyo virus is transmitted through direct or indirect contact with blood or body fluids from an infected person, whether living or deceased. For further details, see the Web page Ebola disease: Symptoms and treatment - Canada.ca.

What is expected of clinicians

1. **Being vigilant during the intake and triage process**
   - Use the measures designed to identify users who travelled and who now present symptoms consistent with EVD. Measures should be implemented to facilitate travellers to quickly identify themselves.
   - Perform hand hygiene measures and don appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) upon arriving in a given healthcare setting.
   - Triage patients with a questionnaire designed to identify possible Ebola cases. Refer to the tool to assist in determining the existence of an infectious disease when a user seeks emergency services (in French only).
   - Immediately take the necessary IPC (infection prevention and control) measures, among them the use of a negative pressure room if available. If not, the patient should be placed in a closed room:
     - As regards the IPC measures to apply in health centres, consult: Maladie à virus Ebola : mesures de prévention et de contrôle pour les hôpitaux - Mise à jour du 3 décembre 2014 (in French only).
     - As regards the IPC measures to apply in health centres (CLSC), consult: Mesures à prendre en présence d'un cas suspect de maladie à virus Ebola dans les cliniques médicales ou les centres intégrés de santé et de services sociaux (installations CLSC) - novembre 2016 (PDF, in French only) **while making sure to adapt the evaluation of the exposure to the countries actually experiencing an outbreak.**
2. **Identify and supervise the suspected cases:**
   - Notify the health centre's IPAC and the physician to enable them to establish priorities with regard to the evaluation. The microbiologist should also be informed as soon as possible.
   - Apply the IPC measures indicated below.
   - Exchange with the microbiologist and the local Department of public health (DPH) to determine the appropriate management based on the level of suspicion, as well as the sampling procedures, which may, if necessary, require the patient to be for transferred to a tertiary care facility.
3. **Immediately declare, by telephone, all potentially suspect cases of Ebola to the DPH physician on call, at 1 855-964-2244 or 1 819 299-2990.**

These contact details are provided solely for health professionals and may not be shared with the public.

Useful links

MSSS Web page: Ebola virus disease | Government of Québec.

MSSS page on severe infectious respiratory diseases as well as a list of the countries that are being closely monitored: *Maladies respiratoires sévères infectieuses (MRSI) – Professionnels de la santé – MSSS* (in French only).

INSPQ: Fièvres hémorragiques virales | Institut national de santé publique du Québec (in French only).

Directory of the LSPG analyses: Ebola | Institut national de santé publique du Québec (in French only) and Suspicion d'infection aux agents étiologiques de groupe de risque 4 (AEGR4) : guide pratique pour les demandes d'analyses de laboratoires | Institut national de santé publique du Québec (in French only).

PHAC Web page: Ebola disease: For health professionals and humanitarian aid workers

PHAC Web page: Symptoms and treatment: https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/ebola.html.

TRANSLATION