

健康資訊-傳染病

Health Information - Communicable Diseases

Ebola disease

Ebola disease (EBOD; formerly known as Ebola haemorrhagic fever) is caused by infection with Ebola virus which belongs to the family *Filoviridae*. The incubation period ranges from 2 to 21 days. Patients may have sudden onset of fever, intense weakness, muscle pain, headache and sore throat. This is followed by vomiting, diarrhoea, rash, impaired kidney and liver function, and in some cases, both internal and external bleeding.

Mode of transmission

Some fruit bats are considered to be the natural host of the virus. The virus is introduced into the human population through close contact with the blood, secretions, organs or other body fluids of infected animals. It then spreads in the community through human-to-human transmission, with infection resulting from direct contact (through broken skin or mucous membranes) with the blood, secretions, organs or other body fluids of infected people, and indirect contact with environments contaminated with such fluids.

Prevention

There is currently no registered vaccine for EBOD in Hong Kong. To prevent the infection, it is important for travellers who go to affected areas to observe the following:

- Observe good personal and environmental hygiene, wash hands with liquid soap and water frequently
- Avoid close contact with feverish or ill persons, and avoid contact with patients' blood and body fluids, and objects contaminated with blood or body fluids of patients
- Avoid contact with animals
- Cook food thoroughly before consumption
- Travellers should seek medical advice promptly if they become ill within 21 days after returning from affected areas and inform doctor of recent travel history

Revised in February 2025



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