EBOLA INFORMATION SHEET

Updated November 14, 2014

What is Ebola?

Ebola is a rare and deadly disease caused by infection with one of the Ebola virus strains.

What are the symptoms of Ebola?

The symptoms are similar to having regular (seasonal) flu, which include:

- Fever
- Severe headache
- Muscle pain
- Muscle weakness
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Abdominal (stomach) pain
- Unexplained hemorrhage (bleeding or bruising)

Symptoms may appear anywhere from 2 to 21 days after exposure to Ebola, but the average is 8 to 10 days. Recovery from Ebola depends on good supportive clinical care and the patient’s immune response. People who recover from Ebola infection develop antibodies that last for at least 10 years.

How does Ebola spread?

Ebola is spread ONLY from sick people. Ebola is NOT spread through casual contact but rather spreads through contact with body fluids from an infected individual demonstrating the symptoms.
How long can an infected person spread Ebola Virus to others?

A person must have symptoms to spread Ebola to others. People are contagious usually start 2 to 21 days after contact with an ill person, but average 8-10 days.

Who is at risk for Ebola?

Anyone is at risk for getting Ebola if they have contact with an infected person. The greatest risk at this point is in traveling to one of the affected countries: Liberia, Guinea, or Sierra Leone. [Note: Nigeria has since been added to the list of affected countries.] CDC is advising that until further notice, people should not travel to these countries unless it is absolutely necessary. Here in the United States, there is no current risk for Ebola virus in either the community or in health care facilities.

How can I protect myself from Ebola?

The best ways to protect you from getting or spreading Ebola are:

- Learn proper hand washing technique. Wash your hands often with soap and water (for at least 15-20 seconds), or use an alcohol based hand sanitizer, especially after you cough or sneeze and or touch dirty surface.
- Try to avoid being around sick people.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Ask everyone around you to cover his/her mouth and nose when he/she coughs and sneezes.
- If you become ill with a fever or any symptoms related to Ebola: DO NOT COME TO CLASS or GO TO THE CLINICAL SITE
- If you are at home call 911; or if you are at the college, call 973-877-3312 and stay away from others.
Is there a vaccine for Ebola?

No, there is no known vaccine for Ebola.

Can I still study with a classmate if I have some of the above-listed symptoms but they are not too bad?

No, you should not. You should seek the advice of a physician and not have any contact with other people for at least 24-48 hours following the cessation of symptoms. (For example, with influenza, you remain infectious for up to 48 hours AFTER your symptoms come to an end!)

How is Essex County College helping to prevent the spread of Ebola?

- Through the promotion of proper hygienic activities (e.g., wash your hands often (NOT only before eating or after using the bathroom but at regular times throughout the day)
- Planned activities to disseminate information about Ebola, including a Panel Discussion with an open forum Q and A
- Make use of the Emergency Text Alert System when appropriate
- Installing alcohol gel stations at appropriate areas to assist in proper hygiene and maintaining existing dispensers
- We are asking anyone (students, faculty, staff, etc.) developing fever or Ebola like symptoms to: Call 973-877-3312, the Essex County College Hot line
- If ill, do not come to class; Don’t go to the clinical site; Don’t meet up with friends
- Developing a policy so that students ill with Ebola who miss class and or clinicals will be able to make the hours up and will not be penalized
- ECC Nursing and Allied Health Division is currently reviewing infection control procedures and is preparing to implement a workshop to re-train students on donning PPE and adopting the budding system
- Advising students of the CDC recommendations and communicating the information as needed
What should you do if you are planning to travel abroad?

Again, it is recommended that you do not travel to countries where the Ebola outbreaks are occurring (Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone)? What should we do if we have study abroad, foreign exchange, research, or other education-related travel planned to these countries?

- CDC has posted Warning – Level 3 Travel Notices recommending that people avoid non-essential travel to Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone at this time. We advise that education-related travel to these countries be postponed until further notice.

Why is CDC recommending that US residents avoid traveling to Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone?

CDC’s recommendations against non-essential travel, including education-related travel, are intended to help control the outbreak and prevent continued spread in two ways: to protect the health of US residents who would be traveling to the affected areas and to enable the governments of countries where Ebola outbreaks are occurring to respond most effectively to contain the outbreak.

Informative Internet Links:

CDC Advice for Colleges, Universities, and Students about Ebola in West Africa

New Jersey Department of Health Ebola Information
http://www.state.nj.us/health/cd/vhf/