



City and County of San Francisco  
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## San Francisco Department of Public Health

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### What is SF Doing to Prevent Ebola?

11/14/14

*While the risk of an Ebola outbreak in the U.S. remains very low, the City and County of San Francisco is taking preparedness for Ebola very seriously. The Department of Public Health (DPH) has prioritized Ebola planning and preparation by monitoring the situation closely and taking direct action to ensure the highest level of readiness.*

#### Top Points to Know

- *There is no Ebola in San Francisco*
- *As of Tuesday, November 11, there are no confirmed cases of Ebola in the United States.*
- *The Department of Public Health is preparing the City-wide health care response*
- *People should stay calm, stay informed, and take action to protect community health by getting a flu shot.*

#### Key facts:

- There is no Ebola in San Francisco and there are currently no confirmed cases in the United States.
- Due to the Ebola outbreak in Africa, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued a Level-3 Warning urging all U.S. residents to avoid nonessential travel to Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone.
- This infection presents a very low risk to the general public here in the United States, because public health and hospital infection control precautions can contain the spread of the disease.
- An Ebola case was diagnosed in Texas in a traveler from Liberia, and two additional cases have occurred in nurses who cared for that patient. The traveler died and both health care workers recovered.
- A fourth Ebola case was diagnosed in New York in a traveler from Guinea, a physician who had been treating Ebola patients in West Africa. This patient has fully recovered and was released on November 11, 2014.
- We do not expect sustained spread of Ebola virus in the United States because rigorous public health and infection control procedures are in place.

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**The mission of the San Francisco Department of Public Health is to protect and promote the health of all San Franciscans.**

We shall ~ Assess and research the health of the community ~ Develop and enforce health policy ~ Prevent disease and injury ~  
~ Educate the public and train health care providers ~ Provide quality, comprehensive, culturally-proficient health services ~ Ensure equal access to all ~

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- In San Francisco, Ebola infection should only be considered in a person: 1) if that person has returned from Sierra Leone, Liberia, or Guinea in the last 21 days; and 2) if that person has the symptoms of Ebola (high fever and additional symptoms such as headache, diarrhea, vomiting, or weakness). Persons presenting for care with symptoms consistent with Ebola virus or other nonspecific viral symptoms should be asked about their travel history. Persons without a travel history are not considered to be at risk at this time.
  - Patients who report exposure to Ebola virus, or travelers returning from Sierra Leone, Liberia, or Guinea who have symptoms compatible with Ebola virus infection should be immediately reported to SFDPH Communicable Disease Control at 415-554-2830.

### **1) What is the San Francisco Department of Public Health doing to prepare?**

- It is unlikely that a case of Ebola virus will occur in SF. However if a suspected case should occur, there are systems in place to ensure a quick response from the department and the medical community, and to maintain public safety.
- San Francisco hospitals are actively preparing to safely care for an Ebola case. Preparedness activities include drills, trainings, and the development of protocols and plans.
- Hospital staff throughout San Francisco are trained on general infection-control precautions. In the case of Ebola, control measures would include standard, contact, and droplet precautions, with additional airborne precautions used in many settings. Hospitals are currently working with their staff to provide additional, Ebola-specific training.
- At San Francisco General Hospital, signs have been posted in the Emergency Department to instruct patients on what to do if their travel has brought them from Sierra Leone, Liberia, or Guinea and who have symptoms compatible with Ebola virus infection.

### **2) Current Response**

- The Health Department (SFDPH) has informed local clinicians how to recognize a potential Ebola case.
- The CDC is providing comprehensive information to the public health and medical communities in the United States concerning how to prepare for a potential Ebola virus case.
- SFDPH has been in frequent, regular communication with local hospitals to share information and guidance concerning Ebola, specifically concerning recognition of cases and appropriate infection control measures. Health Advisories have been issued to the San Francisco healthcare community. Communications have gone out to promote awareness around the current situation, to provide guidance from the CDC and the California Department of Health and to share infection control recommendations.
- Hospitals have been instructed to isolate any individual with suspected Ebola virus to prevent the spread of the virus to health care workers, patients and the public. The health care community regularly communicates with SFDPH on reportable diseases. If Ebola were suspected here, it would be reported to SFDPH and California Department of Public Health immediately. Disease reporting to SFDPH of urgent communicable disease issues is facilitated by 24 hour coverage by an MD.

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- The Department of Emergency Management is coordinating city-wide response, in collaboration with the Department of Public Health, the San Francisco International Airport and first responders, including fire, police, 911 and ambulance transport.
  - Five U.S. airports (Newark, NJ; JFK, NYC; Hartsfield-Jackson, Atlanta; Washington-Dulles, DC and O'Hare, Chicago) were identified as the receiving areas to process travelers from the three West African countries impacted by Ebola. The CDC will screen these individuals and track the destinations of asymptomatic individuals. The State Health Department will be notified and inform county health officers when travelers are due to arrive locally.

### 3) What is Ebola?

- Ebola virus has caused outbreaks on and off, since the 1970s, mostly in Africa. The current Ebola virus outbreak has caused 4,900 deaths in the African countries of Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea, with a limited number also in Nigeria and Senegal. The Ebola in Nigeria and Senegal has been contained.
- The virus is not known to spread through the air. Rather it spreads by contact with an infected individual's body secretions, such as through direct contact with bodily fluids including (but not limited to) blood, urine, stool, sweat, semen and breast milk. Proper Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is effective to stop the spread of Ebola virus in the healthcare setting.
- The symptoms of the virus include fever, headache, diarrhea, vomiting, and weakness. In many affected individuals, the illness progresses to bleeding and organ damage.
- More than 70% of individuals known to be infected with Ebola virus worldwide during this current outbreak have died of the infection.
- The treatment for Ebola is supportive care: balancing the patient's fluids and electrolytes, maintaining oxygen status and blood pressure, and treating them for any complicating infections.

### 4) What can you do?

- Stay calm
- Get a flu shot. There is much greater risk of getting the flu, and you can protect your health and the community's health by getting a flu shot.
- Stay informed

Latest information on outbreak from the World Health Organization (WHO):

<http://www.who.int/csr/don/archive/disease/ebola/en/>

CDC Ebola webpage: <http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/index.html>

CDC Travel Advisories: <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices>

CDC Fact Sheet for Hospital Preparedness for Ebola Treatment:

<http://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2014/fs1014-ebola-investigation-fact-sheet.pdf>

California DPH Ebola Information Page: <http://cdph.ca.gov/programs/cder/Pages/Ebola.aspx>

SFDPH Health Alerts page: <http://sfcdcp.org/healthalerts.html>

SFDPH Ebola information page: <http://www.sfcdcp.org/ebola.html>