

Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service

FIRE CHIEF'S GENERAL ORDER

Rescinded on 7/22/15

NUMBER: 14-20
October 10, 2014

TO: All MCFRS Personnel

FROM: Fire Chief Steven E. Lohr



SUBJECT: Ebola Virus Disease (EVD)

The MCFRS, in collaboration with the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services, and the Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, recognizes the need for education on and preparation to deal with potential patients with the suspected virus. The goal is to increase understanding of EVD and to prepare for managing these patients.

Prevention (How can I prepare?)

- Know and understand the signs and symptoms of EVD
- Follow and read the Center for Disease Control recommendations at these links:
<http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/>
<http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/pdf/what-need-to-know-ebola.pdf>
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Practice proper infection control.

Signs and Symptoms of EVD

EMS providers must understand how to identify the signs and symptoms of EVD and to avoid the risk of exposure. An EVD patient is **not** infectious and cannot transmit the disease unless they are symptomatic. Symptoms include (per <http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/symptoms/index.html>):

- Fever greater than 101.5 degrees Fahrenheit (often the first sign);
- Severe headache;
- Muscle pain;
- Vomiting;
- Diarrhea;
- Abdominal Pain; or
- Unexplained hemorrhage

AND

- Within the 21 days prior to symptom onset; travel to West Africa where EVD transmission has been reported *or* exposure to an EVD patient.

EVD is spread through direct contact with blood and body fluids.

Most flu-like symptoms are caused by influenza and other common viral infections, and even in areas where EVD is prevalent, the above signs/symptoms are much more likely to be malaria or other virus.

Protection (What I can do to be safe?) Follow normal MCFRS body substance isolation (BSI) procedures

- When conducting a patient assessment and they present with the outlined signs and symptoms ask the following questions (per CDC <http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/pdf/evd-screening-criteria.pdf>):
 1. Have you traveled to/from West Africa in the past 21 days?
 2. Have you had contact with known or true suspected EVD patient in the last 21 days?

If yes, then a higher level of BSI will be required for provider and patient

- For patient with no risk factors with signs/symptoms:

Wear gloves, eye protection and respiratory masks (Provider-issued N95) and place a common filter mask on the patient

Remember, these steps will help avoid flu transmission as well.

- For patients who meet the criteria for suspected EVD with signs/symptoms:
 1. Common filter mask for the patient.
 2. Provider PPE should include N95 with eye protection, impermeable gown and gloves.
 3. If patient is emitting bodily fluids (vomit, diarrhea, bleeding), don booties and face shield/mask.
- Other treatment considerations:
 1. Limit invasive patient interventions on patients with suspected EVD. For example, only start an IV if absolutely necessary.
 2. Immediately report suspected EVD case to receiving facility.

<http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/pdf/ppe-poster.pdf>

Response (What changes will occur?) Currently, there is no need to modify normal operations including, triage, treatment, transportation, and decontamination. However, you should:

- Anticipate call types that may place you in a position of potential exposure, i.e. sick person, trouble breathing etc.
- Use BSI resources as necessary to protect yourself and the patient.
- MCFRS Communications Section will be asking additional questions on certain call types to gather more information.

Notifications (Who do I notify?)

- Immediately report suspected EVD cases to receiving facility.
- Notify the MCFRS EMS Duty Officer for any suspected EVD case or if patient is not transported (refusal, pronouncement, etc.). This notification will begin the support and information flow process for decontamination and EMS personnel support.

Please see the October 3rd Memorandum from Dr Alcorta to all EMS Providers reference Emerging Infectious Diseases.

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