

EBOLA VIRUS DISEASE

Schools and Child Care

www.colorado.gov/ebola

Ebola Virus Disease (Ebola): Guidance for Schools and Child Care Centers

CO-HELP is Colorado's Ebola Hotline

The Colorado Health Emergency Line for Public Information (COHELP) is able to take Ebola-related calls from the public. CO-HELP can be reached at 303-389-1687 or 1-877-462-2911.

Information and contacts

- Ebola preparedness questions can be directed to your [local health department](#).
- It is **not** the job of schools and child care providers to diagnose Ebola.
- School-based health centers should follow CDC's recommendations for [ambulatory care](#) when evaluating a patient with possible Ebola.
- Visit CDPHE's Ebola website for additional resources: www.colorado.gov/ebola

Ebola Facts

- Ebola is spread through direct contact with blood or body fluids (vomit, diarrhea, urine, sweat, semen, saliva, and breast milk) of a person who is sick with Ebola.
- Ebola can only be spread when a person has Ebola and is symptomatic. A person must have traveled to **Guinea**, **Liberia**, or **Sierra Leone**, or come in contact with someone who is symptomatic and infected with the Ebola virus.
- People who traveled to other countries in Africa are **not** at risk of getting Ebola.
- Symptoms of Ebola include fever, severe headache, muscle pain, weakness, diarrhea, vomiting, or stomach pain. Coughing and sneezing are **not** symptoms of Ebola.
- The incubation period is usually 8-10 days (range 2-21 days).
- Ebola is **not** spread through casual contact.
- Ebola is **not** spread through the air or water.
- Ebola is **not** as infectious as the flu or the common cold.
- Ebola virus is killed with household bleach and hospital-grade [disinfectants](#).
- No children with Ebola have been reported in the U.S.



Steps you can take to prevent the spread of any infectious disease:

- Encourage routine childhood and adult [immunizations](#).
- Promote good [hand hygiene](#).
- Adhere to infection control measures such as sanitation, disinfection and maintenance.
- Ensure staff and parents understand your facility sick policy.
- Parents should be informed of school/child care policies so that they can reinforce healthy behaviors with their children.
- Review [emergency operation plans](#) and reach out to your local health department.

Should I ask every sick child, student and staff member about travel to Guinea, Liberia or Sierra Leone?

- State and local public health agencies are monitoring travelers returning from Ebola-affected countries since these are the people most at risk of being exposed to Ebola.
- If a risk is identified, local public health will work closely with school partners.
- Because public health monitoring is in place and because the chance of a child infected with Ebola first presenting at a school is very low, it is not necessary for schools/child care centers to ask.



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What if a child, student or staff member is suspected to have Ebola or has had contact with someone who has Ebola?

- If a child, student or staff member is sick and did **not** travel to Guinea, Liberia or Sierra Leone in the prior 21 days and did **not** have exposure to someone with Ebola, he or she does **not** have Ebola.
- It is **not** the job of schools and child care providers to diagnose Ebola.
- If you are concerned about an Ebola exposure, call your local health department to discuss.

When should a child/student/staff member be excluded from school/child care?

- Illnesses (e.g., fever, cough, diarrhea, vomiting) are common among children, students and staff. Sick individuals should visit a doctor and stay home until they are feeling better.
- If a child, student or staff member (or their family member) has traveled to Guinea, Liberia or Sierra Leone in the prior 21 days, state and local public health will conduct a risk assessment and will work with school partners as needed. In some situations, an individual will not be able to attend school or a child care center.
- Ebola is not spread unless a person shows symptoms of Ebola. If a child, student or staff member (or family member) is sick and did not travel to Guinea, Liberia or Sierra Leone, and has not had exposure to someone with Ebola, he or she does not have Ebola.

How do I talk to children about Ebola?

- Fear is a natural response to a disease we are unfamiliar with. It is OK to feel and express fear in response to the current Ebola situation.
- [Guidance for parents](#) (CDPHE)
- [Talking with children during outbreaks](#) (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration)
- [How to discuss Ebola with children](#) (American Academy of Pediatrics)

What is being done to prevent travelers arriving from Guinea, Liberia or Sierra Leone from spreading Ebola in the United States?

- Ebola is not spread unless a person shows symptoms of Ebola.
- All people leaving Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone are screened for sickness and are restricted from travel if symptomatic or report exposure to Ebola.
- All people coming to the U.S. from Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone are screened at one of five U.S. airports. Symptomatic travelers do not continue their travel until deemed safe.
- CDPHE and local public health agencies will closely monitor returned travelers in Colorado for 21 days for signs of illness.
- Public health in Colorado uses a number of [methods to prevent exposures](#) to contagious diseases like Ebola, including risk assessment, monitoring, controlled movement, isolation and/or quarantine.

Additional CDC Ebola Resources:

- [Advice for colleges, universities and students health centers](#)
- [Resources for parents, schools and pediatric healthcare professionals](#)
- [Ebola Virus Disease and Children: What Pediatric Health Care Professionals Need to Know](#) (JAMA)
- [What you need to know about Ebola](#)
- [Facts about Ebola](#)
- [FAQs about Ebola](#)
 - [Spanish Version](#)
- [Ebola and Pets](#)
- [Ebola outbreak in West Africa](#)

CDC Information Related to Travel:

- [Travel notices](#)
- [Infographic: Recently in West Africa?](#)
- [Infographic: Going to West Africa?](#)

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