

VIRAL HEMORRHAGIC FEVER

PERSONAL HEALTH FACT SHEET

What is Viral Hemorrhagic Fever?

Viral Hemorrhagic Fever refers to a group of illnesses that are caused by a distinct group of viruses. The term “viral hemorrhagic fever” is a term to describe multi organ failure in the body. Many of the Viral Hemorrhagic Fever viruses cause severe, life threatening disease. These viruses are not found in the US; therefore a diagnosis of the disease may indicate a bioterrorism incident.

How is it spread?

The viruses are spread through close personal contact with a person who is ill with the disease. Healthcare workers or family members who are caring for ill persons and have direct contact with blood, semen, or other body fluids of ill people are likely to become infected themselves. The virus may be spread through the bite of an insect (mosquito, tick). If used as a biological weapon, the virus may be aerosolized or ingested through contaminated food or water.

How is it treated?

- ▶ There is no known treatment
- ▶ There is no vaccine to prevent the illness
- ▶ Supportive care is necessary to treat the symptoms

How can we prevent the spread of Viral Hemorrhagic Fever?

- ▶ Proper medical isolation of ill or exposed persons.
- ▶ The use of gloves, gowns, masks by healthcare workers to prevent infection
- ▶ Proper disposal of medical waste and tissues from ill persons.

SYMPTOMS OF VIRAL HEMORRHAGIC FEVER

Vary by virus type, but most often include the following:

- ▶ Fever
- ▶ Muscle pain
- ▶ Headaches
- ▶ Loss of strength
- ▶ Hemorrhage (bleeding)
- ▶ Low blood pressure

Severe cases may include the following symptoms:

- ▶ Shock
- ▶ Nervous system malfunction
- ▶ Coma
- ▶ Seizures and renal failure
- ▶ Death



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