



Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Ebola

The health and safety of our students and staff is always our top priority in Lewisville ISD. When issues of concern are brought to our attention, we feel it is important to share that with our parents, staff and community. We have prepared the following to help answer your questions. Additional information is available through the [CDC website](#) and [Denton County Health Department's website](#).

What is Ebola?

Ebola is a virus found in several African countries. It is a rare and potentially fatal disease caused by infection with a virus of the family Filoviridae, genus Ebolavirus.

How is Ebola spread?

Individuals with Ebola cannot spread the virus until symptoms appear. Ebola is spread through direct contact (through broken skin or through the eyes, nose or mouth) with:

- Blood and body fluids (like urine, feces, saliva, vomit, sweat, etc.) of a person who is sick with Ebola.
- Objects (like needles and syringes) that have been contaminated with the blood or body fluids of a person infected with Ebola.

Ebola is **not** spread through the air, water or food.

What are the signs and symptoms of Ebola?

A person infected with Ebola is not contagious until symptoms appear. Signs and symptoms of Ebola typically include: fever greater than 100.4 degrees, severe headache, muscle pain, weakness, diarrhea, vomiting, abdominal pain and unexplained hemorrhaging. Symptoms may appear anywhere from two to 21 days after exposure, but the average is eight to 10 days.

Who is at the greatest risk of exposure?

In an outbreak, those at the highest risk include healthcare workers and family and close friends of a person who has tested positive for Ebola. An individual is only at risk for contracting the Ebola virus if there has been direct contact with any of the three cases in the United States.

The time from exposure to when signs or symptoms of the virus appear (the incubation period) is two to 21 days, but the average time is eight to 10 days.

Recovery from Ebola depends on the patient's immune response. People who recover from Ebola develop antibodies for at least 10 years.

What is the fever threshold for the Ebola virus?

The current temperature guideline for Ebola is 100.4 degrees, as determined by the CDC. LISD's registered nurses follow protocols as determined by the Texas Department of State Health Services and the Texas Administrative Code for excluding students from school with a temperature of 100 degrees or above. These protocols are consistently followed and additional screenings are conducted as warranted.

Is it true that Ebola symptoms are similar to flu symptoms?

Yes. Initial Ebola symptoms aren't much different from flu symptoms. Visit a healthcare facility or your family doctor if you exhibit symptoms.

What can I do to prevent being infected?

There is no FDA-approved vaccine available for Ebola. Experimental vaccines and treatments for Ebola are under development, but they have not yet been fully tested for safety or effectiveness.

To protect yourself from Ebola:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid contact with blood and body fluids of any person, particularly someone who is sick.
- Do not handle items that may have come in contact with an infected person's blood or bloody fluids.
- Do not touch the body of someone who has died from Ebola.
- Do not touch bats and non-human primates or their blood and fluids, and do not touch or eat raw meat prepared from these animals.
- Avoid hospitals in West Africa where Ebola patients are being treated. The U.S. Embassy or consulate is often able to provide advice on medical facilities.
- Seek medical care immediately if you develop fever (temperature of 100.4 or higher) and any of the other following symptoms: headache, muscle pain, diarrhea, vomiting, stomach pain or unexplained hemorrhaging. If you exhibit these symptoms, limit your contact with other people until and when you go to the doctor. Do not travel anywhere else besides a healthcare facility.

Why are you not telling the schools the students attend and staff member work?

For the confidentiality and safety of our students and staff, LISD is not identifying the schools of where relationships to the students and staff member are located. According to Dr. Matt Richardson, Director of Denton County Health Department, HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) and the Health and Safety Code prevent the release of that information except in case of a threat to the public's health, which this is not.

Grapevine-Colleyville ISD announced the names of the schools because they had students on the flight, which are considered contacts. LISD did not have any students or staff on the flight. Therefore, LISD has no contacts in our schools and are considered no risk.

Were any LISD students or staff members on the flight?

No. No LISD students or staff members were on the flight.

Why are you not quarantining the students or staff member?

LISD is not quarantining anyone because we have no contacts and are considered no risk for Ebola. Dr. Matt Richardson, Director of Denton County Health Department, assured us there is no reason to quarantine anyone and there is no reason to close a school. The Denton County Health Department and the CDC are the only organizations that can require isolation or quarantine.

Can I choose to take my child(ren) out of school?

As their parent, it is your choice to remove your child from school. However, LISD is not deeming absences for this particular incident as acceptable.

Are you cleaning the schools?

Our dedicated custodians daily clean all LISD schools and facilities. They have been conducting intensive sanitation in high-touch areas, which began Oct. 2 following concerns about the Enterovirus D68 (EV D68).

Is there a danger of Ebola spreading in the United States?

Ebola is not spread through casual contact; therefore, the risk of an outbreak in the United States is very low. According to the CDC: "We know how to stop Ebola's further spread: thorough case finding, isolation of ill people, contacting people exposed to the ill person and further isolation of contacts if they develop symptoms. The U.S. public health and medical systems have had prior experience with sporadic cases of diseases such as Ebola. In the past decade, the United States had five imported cases of Viral Hemorrhagic Fever (VHF) diseases similar to Ebola (1 Marburg, 4 Lassa). None resulted in any transmission in the United States.

Where can I find more information?

If you have any questions or concerns about this virus, please visit the Denton County Health Department's website: www.dentoncounty.com/health or contact your family physician.