

## **Ebola virus – what you need to know**

There is currently an outbreak of Ebola virus infection in West Africa, and there have been a few cases of transmission in the United States involving health care workers. While Ebola is a serious, frequently fatal infection, it is not as easily spread as flu or cold viruses. The MTA is committed to providing all of our employees with important medical information about the Ebola virus and risk of infection as well as appropriate protocols, training and personal protective equipment for those with potential occupational risk.

Here are some basic facts about the Ebola virus:

- Ebola is not transmitted through air (such as standing next to someone on a bus or train), water or food.
- It is spread by direct contact with a person who is sick from Ebola or by contact with their body fluids after they have begun to exhibit symptoms of the virus.
- Typical symptoms include fever, headache, muscle pain, weakness, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and abnormal bleeding.
- The incubation period is between two and 21 days. People are contagious only after onset of symptoms, usually starting with fever.
- There is currently no vaccine or established treatment that is effective against the virus. Some patients may be given experimental therapies but hospital care is basically supportive.

Help protect yourself from germs such as Ebola or flu by:

- Frequently washing your hands with soap and water or using alcohol based sanitizer.
- Avoiding direct contact with anyone with Ebola or their bodily fluids, and if you cannot avoid such contact, adhering with established infection control procedures and the use of appropriate personal protective equipment.

If you have had direct contact with someone with Ebola infection or with their bodily fluids, call your doctor. You should also monitor your health by taking your temperature at least twice daily for 21 days and call 911 to obtain immediate medical attention if you develop the symptoms identified above within three weeks of such contact. Alert the medical facility about your symptoms before going. If you have had unprotected contact with bodily fluids from an unknown individual, call your doctor for guidance.

Find more information at:

- [www.health.ny.gov](http://www.health.ny.gov)
- [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)
- Your agency's intranet site for specific infection control policies and procedures

MTA continue to have frequent communications with both the New York State and New York City Departments of Health and union representation to consider any updated recommendations to enhance the safety of our employees and customers.