Ebola

Key Facts & Answers
This presentation was developed by the Ministry of Health and provides basic information regarding the Ebola Virus Disease. It focuses on:

- Defining Ebola
- Listing the signs and symptoms of Ebola
- Describing the disease process
- Describing how Ebola is spread
- Listing treatment options
- Detailing prevention measures
- Identifying key roles of the public in preventing Ebola
What is **Ebola**?

- **Ebola Virus Disease (EVD)** is a **deadly** acute **(short duration)** infection caused by the Ebola virus.

- As much as 50% to 90% of infected persons will die.

- The **disease is highly infectious and spreads quickly** from person to person BUT can be prevented.

- Although the disease started in West Africa, it is currently a threat to all countries including Jamaica.
Ebola History

- Ebola Virus Disease was first discovered in 1976
- There have been several outbreaks of Ebola in the past, all concentrated and contained in West Africa
- The latest outbreak started in 2014 and is now a threat to the entire world
- Improved Global connectivity and increased travel has led to the current international spread
- The World Health Organization has now declared it an international public health emergency
Ebola Signs & Symptoms

- The **incubation period** (the time before persons start showing symptoms) may last from **2-21 days**

- On average most persons with Ebola show symptoms within **7-9 days** of being infected

- Persons infected with Ebola will have **early** and **late** symptoms
Symptoms continued...

- The **Early Symptoms** which are **flu-like**, commonly occur in the first few days of illness and include:
  - Fever
  - Headache
  - Extreme Tiredness
  - Sore Throat
  - Muscle pain
  - Nausea
  - Loss of Appetite
Later Symptoms

- Vomiting
- Diarrhoea
- Coughing
- Hiccups
- Difficulty Breathing
- Measles like rash
- Abdominal pain
- Red Eyes
- Bleeding

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How Ebola affects the body

Ebola Virus Disease (EVD):

- **attacks every organ and tissue of the human body** except the bones and skeletal muscles
- causes clotting of the blood
- leads to **sluggish and inadequate blood flow to the organs**
- dampens down the immune system response
- results in **rapid dehydration/ loss of body fluids**
- often causes **extensive bleeding** in most patients which results in death
Progress of the Disease

Ebola virus’ typical path through a human being:

First symptoms:
- Day 7-9: Headache, fatigue, fever, muscle soreness
- Day 10: Sudden high fever, vomiting blood, passive behavior
- Day 11: Bruising, brain damage, bleeding from nose, mouth, eyes, anus
- Day 12: Loss of consciousness, seizures, massive internal bleeding, death

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Source: U.S. Centers for Disease and Control, BBC
Graphic: Melina Yingling

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People who recover from Ebola infection develop antibodies that last for at least 10 years, possibly longer.
How is Ebola Spread?

Ebola is **only** spread by persons who show symptoms.

Ebola is spread mainly by **person to person contact** including:

- Close contact with infected persons **who show or have symptoms of the disease**
- Contact with wound, body fluids (urine, vomit, blood, semen, sweat, stool)
- Handling soiled linen & clothing of infected persons
- Touching the body of someone who has died from Ebola.

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Ebola enters the body through the mouth, nose and eyes, or a break in the skin.

Ebola is also spread through sexual intercourse as the germ is found in the semen of an infected person for up to 3 months.

Contact with objects (like needles and syringes) that have been contaminated with the virus can lead to infection.
Ebola is not spread through the air, water, or food.

The Ebola virus lives for up to several hours on surface areas such as door knobs etc.

Hospital strength disinfectants and household chlorine bleach kills Ebola.
Who is at high risk for Ebola?

- **Health Care Workers** who are not properly equipped or who do not follow strict work precautions while caring for Ebola infected patients are at high risk of getting the disease.

- **All travellers, especially persons who travel to West Africa** and other areas with Ebola outbreak are at high risk of becoming infected with the disease.
How can an exposed person know if he or she is infected with Ebola?

- A blood test done at hospital can show if you have Ebola

- **After 21 days**, if an exposed person does not develop symptoms, they will not become sick with Ebola
Treatment of Ebola

- There is no specific treatment for Ebola but therapies aimed at rehydrating the body are used.
- Symptoms of Ebola are treated as they appear.
- Early Treatment can increase chances of survival.
- Experimental drugs have been used with success with two persons so far.
- A vaccine is not yet available.
Persons with Ebola are best cared for in hospitals because:

- Patients will be provided with the appropriate treatment that is specific to their symptoms
  - For example: Rapid dehydration which is experienced by all Ebola patients is treated using equipment and special fluids only available in hospitals

- Hospitals are equipped and staffed to appropriately isolate patients thus reducing the risk of spread
Key Preventions Measures

Effective strategies for prevention include:

✓ Travel restrictions/ limits to outbreak areas

✓ Prompt **identification and isolation of** sick or Ebola exposed persons

✓ Good infection control techniques in hospitals

✓ Excellent and consistent hygiene and hand-washing practices by all persons

✓ Heightened Ebola awareness among all members of the population
**Prevention Tips**

- **Avoid** ALL non-essential travel to West Africa and other areas with Ebola.

- **Take great care** while travelling overseas and report to the Ministry of Health, all trips to Ebola affected areas.

- **Avoid** contact with blood and body fluids of any person, particularly someone who is sick.
Prevention Continued...

- **Avoid** contact with persons who have symptoms of Ebola.

- **Do not** handle items that may have come in contact with an infected person’s blood or body fluids.

- **Do not** touch the body of someone who has died from Ebola.

- **Do not** touch clothes & bed cloths of people who have died of Ebola.
Prevention Continued...

- **Decontaminate** or **Sanitize** areas/surfaces using **approved chlorine bleach**

- **Wash hands frequently** with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

- **Avoid physical contact** with persons who appear to be ill
Prevention Continued...

- **Avoid** crowded areas/ spaces

- **Exercise great care** and practice and good hygiene in **public spaces** including **airports and hospitals and other health facilities**

- **Report** suspected cases of Ebola to the nearest health facility, **immediately**.
Ebola Hope

- Poor African countries including Nigeria and Senegal have managed to overcome Ebola and are declared Ebola free by the WHO.

- People who recover from Ebola infection develop antibodies that last for at least 10 years, possibly longer.

- Vaccines and Medications for Ebola are being developed.

- Preventions measures such as identification and isolation of sick persons along with good infection control and public education works.
Ebola Hope – “Ebola Free Nigeria”
Nigeria’s Story is a Ray of Hope for All

Screening/ Detection

Hand-washing & Hygiene

Public Education

Isolation & Treatment

Decontamination

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Your Roles and Responsibilities

- Stay informed about Ebola and share correct information with others.
- Assess personal risk for Ebola
- Be on the alert for possible Ebola cases and report any suspicious symptoms
- Cooperate with instructions and guidance from the Ministry of Health
- Exercise great caution while showing care and respect for others
Added Ebola Education Resources

Click on the links below for additional resources:

- MOH “Ebola Signs and Symptoms” poster
- MOH “Ebola Key Facts and Answers to Your Questions” brochure
- MOH Ebola FAQ handout/ fact sheet
- MOH Ebola “Ebola: What you Should know” flyer
- MOH “Airport Ebola Advisory” Wallet-size Card with calendar
- MOH “Airport Ebola Advisory” poster
- MOH “Ebola Talk Facts” PSAs/ Videos

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For more information, contact the Ministry of Health at Toll Free Line: 1-888-one-love (1-888-663-5683) Website: www.moh.gov.jm
Works Cited/References

Works Cited Continued…

- Foot Prints Travel Blogs (2012) [www.vietnamtravelblogs.com](http://www.vietnamtravelblogs.com)
Questions & Answers

END OF PRESENTATION