

October 22, 2014

Dear Parent/Guardian:

For the past month, the outbreak of Ebola in West Africa has been a headline story in the news, and many people are worried about this virus coming to Vermont.

At this time there are no cases of Ebola in Vermont. The Vermont Health Department has been speaking with hospitals and health care providers to make sure they have the information they need if a case of Ebola is found here.

Ebola is not spread through the air or by water. A person cannot spread Ebola until he or she has symptoms. The Ebola virus is spread through direct contact (through broken skin or mucous membranes such as those in the eyes, nose or mouth) with:

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

The Health Department is working with infectious disease experts, hospitals and emergency medical services to plan for the unlikely arrival of a person with Ebola in Vermont. If there is a case of Ebola here, the Health Department will stop the spread of the virus by speaking to all people who had contact with the sick person and monitoring them for 21 days in case symptoms start.

In stressful situations like this, there tends to be a lot of inaccurate information, and this can increase anxiety. Getting your news from reliable sources such as the Health Department website www.healthvermont.gov and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's website www.cdc.gov will provide you with the most correct and best information.